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THE CHURCH AND THE NATION

CHARGES AND ADDRESSES

BY

MANDELL CREIGHTON, D.D., D.C.L., LL.D., ETC.

SOMETIME BISHOP OF LONDON

EDITED BY

LOUISE CREIGHTON

NEW IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

1905

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PREFACE

ALL the papers which appear in this volume have already been printed either in pamphlet form, or in the reports of Church Congresses and Diocesan Conferences. But it is thought desirable to bring them together in one volume, so that they may give something like a continuous view of Dr. Creighton's ideas on the most important questions affecting the Church of England at this time. It is inevitable that there should be a certain amount of repetition in such a reprint, but it has seemed better to leave the addresses as they stand rather than to make any attempt to rearrange their contents; only those portions dealing with current Diocesan affairs have been omitted. One or two of the addresses were delivered *ex tempore*, and exist only as taken down by the reporters. These have been, as far as possible, corrected and put into shape.

The first paper, on Christian Ethics, is given as a general introduction to show the way in which Dr. Creighton considered that religion must influence the moral ideals of the nation. The Peterborough addresses deal, for the most part, with voluntary schools and religious education generally, and with the other pressing questions of the day, Welsh Disestablishment, and the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, Biblical Criticism and various social problems. The concluding papers are all mainly concerned with the great question which, to Dr. Creighton, had always been of primary importance—the position and meaning of the Church of England and its relation to the life of the nation. As years went on he felt more and more the need that this should be made clear, though it will be seen, on reading the earlier papers, that his own opinions had undergone no change, and were the consistent outcome both of his historical studies and of his experience of life. Recent events only brought home to him with ever-increasing force the necessity that people should understand the historical position of the Church of England.

He had always emphasised the importance of the study of Ecclesiastical History. In a letter written to a pupil in 1879 he says:

"You do not care much I see about Church history, but it is a most important part of all history. Popular Protestantism has so grotesquely misrepresented facts about the Reformation, that now one of the great means used by the Roman Catholics to make converts is to prove to any who will listen to them, the falsity of their opinions about facts of the past." In his public utterances the same note is struck again and again: people must know more, must understand better the history of the past, must learn what really happened at the Reformation, if they would understand the position of the Church of England in the present day.

When he came to London the turn of events showed how much such knowledge and understanding, as he had always urged, were needed. He was called upon to guide opinion, to put his theories into practice, to impress them upon the public. To make clear the meaning of the Church of England was the aim of his teaching public and private. In a letter written 11th January, 1899, he says: "We must fall into line on a liberal interpretation of the Anglican system; this must be by reference to its *principles*, not to its *letter*. This is the aim which I am steadily pursuing without, I trust, undue haste or pressure, or pedantry."

These words recall his own definition of a statesman in the History of the Papacy: "He had the greatest mark of political genius—he knew how to wait till the full time had come". The work of teaching and persuading must be done slowly. Anything that tended to precipitate action and to force conclusions must be dangerous. In another letter, written 28th June, 1898, he says: "A number of trivial matters have raised a great question which must be faced. It is, as you say, the nature of the Church of England. We must get that clear. A number of devout persons have gone on borrowing from other sources till they have obscured what has never been definitely settled since the Tractarian upheaval. The point is to get this clear. You will see that I am struggling on quietly in this direction."

It is obvious that, if the nature of the Church of England is to be made clear, what really happened at the Reformation must be understood. To Dr. Creighton the great importance and interest of the Reformation lay in its being a national movement, making for liberty and appealing to sound learning. In a letter written on 4th October, 1899, he says: "The changes made in England were changes in spirit, temper, appeal to learning and assertion of liberty".

The main importance of the Reformation was not to him doctrinal. In the same way he felt that the causes of the disquiet experienced during the last years could not be traced to any special interest in doctrine or dogma. "The real question now raised" he writes in a private letter on 3rd October, 1899, "is the maintenance of the Church of England as it has been accepted by the English people, *in relation to their national life* during three centuries and a half." He did not think that people in general are interested in ceremonies as such, or in doctrine as such, "but" he goes on "they feel that a powerful and useful institution must not be turned into something which it never has been and which they do not want. Roman ways are suspected because they lead up to the Roman conception of the Church, as an organisation created and ruled by the clergy, existing independently of its members, conferring or withholding salvation according as its rules are observed. Priesthood, Sacraments, Confession all are explicable by themselves. They can be placed in a system which finds room for individual liberty; or in a system which excludes it. But it makes a great difference how the system shapes itself. Do not let us make a mistake. The question to be decided is, how much of the results of the

Oxford movement are to be permanently incorporated into the Anglican system? The answer is from my point of view, "As much as is compatible with the maintenance of that system as founded on a view of the Church which safeguards liberty".

Some seem to have imagined that his insistence on the national character of the Church of England implied a comparative indifference to the doctrines of the Church, if only it was a useful factor in the national life. This was far from being the case. He did not insist upon doctrine only because he saw no danger to the faith on the doctrinal side in the present controversies. "There is no question of tampering with the faith" he wrote on 9th August, 1899. And again in the same letter, "The faith is secure, it is only certain modes of expressing some portions of it which are in question. Ceremonies, exact methods of services, even discipline are questions which may be settled by the national consciousness. That consciousness is very insular. A statesman may try to think in larger terms, but he has to express himself in forms which that consciousness will accept. A churchman has to do the same." It was as an English citizen that he felt so strongly the need for the national character of the Church. When

speaking of disestablishment he would often say that it was as an English citizen he would oppose it, not as a churchman. He believed in the mission of the English nation. He saw in a vision his great Diocese of London as a restored Jerusalem, a praise in the earth, able to exhibit universal truth in such a way as to attract mankind. But how could such a vision ever be realised if the State repudiated its connexion with the Church, if the Church lost its national character, and no longer maintained and nourished the national righteousness.

Freedom from controversy, he felt, must be secured, if the Church were to do her work. He did not hope to win this by compromise, still less by prosecutions or enforced uniformity. "There is no hope of people agreeing," he wrote in October, 1899; "they must learn to agree to differ and to live in peace." An old college friend who was staying with him that autumn writes: "He spoke very frankly about his difficulties in the Diocese of London. He said, if he only had time, he thought he could surmount them. He did not despair of subduing his more rebellious clergy by patience, moderation and sweet reasonableness, nor of bringing the extreme Protestant to a less aggressive temper by the same means. There was no

bitterness in his tone, no hankering after a weak and temporizing compromise. But an infinite tenderness for the sincere convictions of men of different views and an assured confidence that a solution and a reconciliation might be found by a better appreciation of the historical position and antecedents of the Anglican Church."

He was not fettered by the past, but he felt the importance of learning its lessons. "Progress," he wrote, "can only be made, when all that is good in the past is retained, we do not want to subvert 1559, but to absorb it."

An atmosphere of controversy was not only hateful to him because of its nature and the inevitable way in which it tends to obscure instead of revealing the truth; but because of the hindrances which it placed in the way of the real work of the Church. "Very willingly" he said to his clergy in the Peterborough Diocese in 1894, "would you and I pursue our work for Christ in peace, undisturbed by such controversy." Yet he felt that by care and patience order must be maintained and authority enforced, "worshippers must not be confused by the multiplicity of variations" in the conduct of services. There must be "a clear understanding about the limits of permissible variation". His great comfort was the knowledge that in the majority

of the parishes in his Diocese, the real work of the Church was going on, undisturbed by what the newspapers called the crisis in the Church. He was never tired of saying that the object of the Christian Church was to set forth the Person of Christ, and so to lead to the formation of the the Christian character. "We should dread" he said to his Diocesan Conference in 1899, "all minor issues which may tend even for a moment to obscure the supreme truth."

May he being dead yet speak to the Church and the Nation which he loved so well, and may his words help to bring that peace and unity of effort which can alone make it possible for Church and Nation to fulfil the mission which God has entrusted to them.

LOUISE CREIGHTON.

I have to thank the Church Historical Society and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge for permission to reprint the papers on "The Abolition of the Roman Jurisdiction" and "The Idea of a National Church".

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CHRISTIAN ETHICS.[1]

THE point which I wish to bring before you is the ethical function of the Church of Christ at the present day. First of all I would emphasise what has already been said, that high ethical principles and lofty moral character are possible apart from Christian teaching. God left Himself not without witness. All men have a sense of right and wrong, and can develop that sense. The teaching of our Lord embraced, as we should have expected, all the best results of man's discovery in the region of morals, and carried them further. The kingdom of God, which He came to establish, was a body of believers in Him, endowed by Him with spiritual power, whereby they could rise to a higher level of life, and greater dignity of action, because they knew certainly the will of God, which others only groped after. But this body of believers was to work in the world, and was to influence the world through the natural and existing forms of social life and action. Into these it was to breathe a higher spirit, and give them greater consistency and a loftier purpose. This the Church has certainly done. Perhaps it has never yet been sufficiently recognised that Christianity has had an influence upon thought and action extending

[1] An address given at the Folkestone Church Congress, 1892.

far beyond the limits of the Church itself. No form of ethical speculation in Europe since the establishment of the Christian Church has been untouched by it, or has ventured to fall below its standard. Indeed, other systems have either professed to go beyond it in enthusiasm, or have tried to show that its moral results may be obtained without the aid of its doctrines, that Christian morality may exist without its supernatural sanction or its supernatural aids. The value of Christ's teaching as a clear and cogent statement of ethical principles has never been seriously called in question.

But, as a matter of fact, ethical knowledge is more easily supplied than ethical motive. Now Christianity explains the "ought" of moral action, the supremacy of duty, as the expression of the upward struggle of man to reach the true law of his being, imprinted in his heart by his Creator. "The best we know" comes from "the best there is," and by following it we reach Him.

Further, that Creator set forth His law, not in enactments, but in a life at once human and Divine; a life which was once manifested as a pattern and exists for ever as a power; a life whose virtue can be communicated to individual souls. Hence it comes that the Christian knows the moral law, not only as the expression of the highest efforts of human nature, nor as the wisest arrangement of social life, but as the manifestation in man of an eternal order, partially operative here, but entirely supreme in the spiritual world to which he is called. Further, the Christian believes that in his pursuit of that law he is aided by

the Author of it, who has set forth its meaning in a life, and gives him the spirit of that life for his aid. But God's help is given to man by natural means. Socrates might feel the necessity of care lest he should injure "the eye of his soul". St. Paul carried the matter further when he stated the practical object of the Christian life: "Herein do I exercise myself, to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man alway". It was Christianity that gradually enforced the truth that human nature had a special organ for the acquisition of ethical knowledge in conscience, and by so doing placed ethical progress upon a scientific basis. The analysis of conscience is not older than the eighteenth century, and the writings of Bishop Butler are of incalculable importance, as marking out the means of moral progress through the recognition of the supremacy of conscience, and of the consequent duty of its cultivation.

This is the point which I should like to emphasise. Men talk about moral advance as though it was the result of greater knowledge about moral principles, or of a more general diffusion of that knowledge. But this is not so. The moral code is in no sense new. It has long been known and taught in Europe. No one disputes its truth. But men like to explain it away when it runs counter to their immediate interests. They ignore it, or put it in the secondary place. It is natural to man to try to find excuses for this perversity, to excuse others because he may need excuse for himself in turn. The general excuse is ignorance and the prevalence of a low standard. But there was rarely ignorance of the wrongfulness of

the action in itself, and a low standard only means that men agreed to combine in acting wrongfully. When Peter said to the people of Jerusalem, "And now, brethren, I wot that in ignorance ye did it," he meant ignorance of the full meaning of the crucifixion, not ignorance of the wrongfulness of clamouring for the blood of an innocent man. Of this they were reminded by Pilate, but they paid no heed to the reminder. The sense of combined action led them to suppose that there was a motive of public utility underlying it, and the belief in public utility led to the disregard of an obvious moral law. I would ask you if that is not a pattern of mind that is called politic and statesman-like in almost every age.

The difference in moral insight between past and present is not very large. Moral progress does not depend upon any increase in ethical knowledge, but upon an increased consistency in the application of the knowledge which has long been the heritage of the human race. How is this to be obtained? The Christian moralist must answer, by a constant training of the individual conscience, and by bringing to bear on society at large an unswerving application of moral judgment. I have already pointed out that the Christian Church has done much in heightening the standard of the world. It has done this mainly because it has asserted the universality of duty, its application to the rights of all men. But if the Church has influenced the world, the world in its turn has influenced the Church. Every form of institution tends to take a partial view of its duties; and every organised form of ecclesiastical institution has suffered from its con-

tact with the world. The claim to define what was necessary for its own preservation has been widely exercised, with the result that principles of general utility and motives of temporary convenience have led to practical abrogation of some portion of the moral law. The maxim that the end justifies the means has been emphatically condemned by all religious bodies; but has been frequently acted upon by all alike. Yet a moral act must be without flaw alike in its motive, in its aim, and in the means by which it is pursued. For no outward and material result can be profitable which is won at the sacrifice of the tenderness and sensitiveness of conscience, Men cannot be permanently benefited by that which debases them in the scale of being. The moral significance of the triumph of the Cross must grow in clearness and definiteness before Christian ethics have spoken their last word.

Is not this the meaning of the high place assigned by Christ's teaching to humility, and of the catalogue of virtues enumerated in the Beatitudes as the qualification of the children of the kingdom? Motive is set higher than action. The means are set higher than the end, or rather the end itself is spiritualised; and the spiritual end, which must rest upon faith, is exalted above the material end, which pursues some immediate and tangible result. We are given a standard of judgment which goes beyond the limits of any organised system, religious, philosophical or political. We are bidden to judge things solely as they promote, or fail to promote, the sensitiveness, the delicacy, the integrity and the authority of conscience. As this high

principle is grasped, we pass beyond the region of casuistry into the region of positive truth, and escape the subtle temptation to fight the battle of the spirit with the weapons of the flesh.

The ethical force of Christianity can only be set forth by its power in training delicacy of conscience, which trembles at the approach of evil, and is keen in detecting its insidious advances. All other progress is only valuable because it testifies to moral progress, and opens up wider fields for its advance. Moral progress does not depend on increased knowledge of moral principles, but on an increased application of these principles to all relationships of life. A man may be moral in his family life, less moral in his daily business, only conventionally moral in his public life, and unable to see the application of moral considerations to international relationships. Ethical progress means the moralising of all these spheres of judgment and action. It is the primary duty of the Christian Church so to teach, and so to act in its corporate capacity, as to impress on every one of its members the universality of moral obligation, and the unchangeable character of the imperative of duty, which cannot be explained away, which admits of no exceptions, which knows no balance of disadvantages. The practical object of its system should be to make the conscience of its members sensitive to evil, ready to detect the insidious approach of evil, and powerful to enforce the authority of conscience. It should stand before the world as the trainer of "artists in virtue," as Christian saints have lately been called, men whose consciences have been made sensitive by the operation

of the Holy Spirit, who are continually discovering by their spiritual insight new fields of moral action, which are thus opened up for the work of the Christian community. Such, in her many failures and shortcomings, has been the work of the Church in the past. Never, I think, did the world more clearly recognise its need of the Church than it does to-day. By catching the full significance of that appeal, the Church, as the purifier of social life, can moralise, spiritualise, transform the world.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN CONFERENCE, 1893.[1]

IT is an easier matter for me to speak to you this year than it was last, and I trust that every succeeding year will render the task still more easy and still more agreeable. For myself, I feel that every month that I work in this Diocese brings me more and more close to an increasing number of both clergy and laity. I will only begin what I have to say to-day by remarking that I cannot express my gratitude for the kindness which I have received. I have found on all occasions that my opinion and my advice have even had undue weight attached to them, and I am proud to say that no Bishop could possess a more loyal body of clergy than does the Bishop of Peterborough. The work that we have been engaged in during the past year has been a work of steady progress. It is satisfactory to think that this has been done by means of loyal co-operation. We have had nothing of great importance to chronicle in the history of this Diocese; in fact, I sincerely hope we never may have things of importance to chronicle. The things which are notorious are not notorious for their merits, but for their defects. It is the tragedies which live in history,

[1] This address was delivered extempore, and is printed from the reporter's notes.

and the gentle, quiet progress is unrecorded. The life of the Church ought to have no tragedies. The life of the Church ought to tell only of slow and steady progress. It is God's way, this way of slow and steady progress, the way which we see marked out on the creation of the world. Let us be content if we are working on slowly and steadily towards the goal of which we are increasingly assured.

But although the Diocese has nothing remarkable to chronicle, it has none the less been a year of great importance in the history of the Church of England. That importance arises from the expression of feeling on the part of the Church as regards a particular measure that was brought before Parliament last Session. I refer of course to that great demonstration of the Church of England which was made in London, when the two Archbishops thought it desirable to summon the Convocations of both provinces, as well as representatives from every parish in both provinces, to meet and make their views heard about the Welsh Suspensory Bill. It is quite true that that Bill has disappeared, but of course we cannot for a moment doubt that another Bill will be introduced in its place. We cannot doubt that next session will see the introduction into Parliament of a Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church in the four Dioceses of Wales. It will be a better Bill than the Suspensory Bill. It will be honest, which the Suspensory Bill was not. It will be our duty to meet it—of course we mean to oppose it. But I think we ought to be quite clear what are the grounds on which we intend to oppose it, and we ought to be able to make these

grounds clear to the people at large. Perhaps you will pardon me for making a few remarks on that subject, as I have not yet had the opportunity of doing so at any diocesan meeting.

If we approach this subject, we ought to approach it in a strictly practical sense. We do not want to talk much, but what we want to do is to defend our Church to the very utmost of our power. At the same time we must be perfectly willing to look the facts in the face, and to accept the opposition of those who oppose us frankly and in a liberal spirit.

How then does the matter present itself to the mind of the impartial observer? It is impossible not to see that there is spreading in England certainly, and in other countries also, a tendency towards decentralisation in government. It is felt that a central government has too much to do; and it is felt on many sides that it would be very desirable to extend local government within certain areas. Whether that is wise or not I am not discussing. I simply observe that it is so. If there is such a desire, it is necessary to find areas, and for the purpose of finding areas it is necessary to arrive at something which is supposed to be a principle. Such a principle is easily seized in the rather vague and illusory term, nationality. The sentiment of nationality is complicated in its origin, however real it may be in operation. It is not founded so much on race or language, as on identity of historical experience. It is hard to express definitely, but it tends to seek expression in some form or other. It seems to me, and again I am speaking simply as an observer, that

an unfortunate attempt has been made to identify the undoubted sentiment of Welsh nationality—which, I think, we all respect, and wish to see considered in any governmental measures relating to the welfare of the different parts of the United Kingdom—with opposition to the English Church. That is what we object to. We say, "maintain your nationality if you choose; take your nationality as a plea for local government; use it for any purpose you will; but for heaven's sake do not bring your nationality into the sphere of politics, which is already tainted by religious antagonism". We say it is one of the greatest misfortunes that, in past ages, national cries have been in any form whatever associated with religious cries. For that reason intolerance and wrong-doing have been associated with the Church, not because the questions were ecclesiastical questions, but because they were national questions, and it was convenient from time to time to clothe national hostilities in the garb of religious belief. We see and deplore that in the past, and we are quite justified in asking any responsible body of politicians to pause before they take any steps whatever to identify what is a national cause with religious bigotry, and we maintain that the cry for Disestablishment in Wales is nothing more or less than the revival of ancient bigotry. It is an anachronism. It is unworthy of true liberalism. We say to the Welsh party, without wishing to interfere with their political aspirations, "My friends, you have made a mistake; you have chosen a cry for your party, but it is a very bad cry. Put that cry on one side and get a better. You can float Welsh nationality on far better bases

than that. Do not begin with a Parliamentary balance that comes out of Church spoliation. Do not try to float Home Rule, and make it acceptable to the people by flaunting before them a bait of pecuniary advantage, to be immediately obtained by an act of spoliation." We ask them to adopt a different basis of proceeding to that which they have already chosen. These facts are obvious, although they are not so often urged as they might be, because men have an objection to going to the bottom of anything, and facing it as it really stands.

I hope you will not think I have wandered unduly from the question before me. I wish to discuss the matter solely from the point of view of common sense, because it is quite obvious that the attempt to unite Welsh nationality with the position of the Church has absolutely no foundation in past history. There has been no Welsh religious feeling separate from the religious feeling of the rest of England; there has been no such thing as a Welsh Church, and there has been no such thing as special Welsh religious sentiment. Wales has always, on those points, been simply a member of England, and a loyal and devoted member of the English Church. It happens at the present day that nonconformity is prominent in Wales, but it is of comparatively recent growth, and dates from the end of the last century. Nonconformity is admitted to have been, in the past, stronger in Wales than at the present, and the present attempt to attack the Church in the Welsh Dioceses is an attempt to make a last stand against an invigorated and rapidly advancing Church. It must be admitted that a great

deal of very misleading language is used on this subject. A little while ago, my eye fell on the utterance of an eminent politician, who said that one of the great tasks to be done in the future was to free Wales from the yoke of an unnational, not to say, an anti-national Church. The sentence entirely took my breath away. I was absolutely unable to understand to what events in the past the speaker thought he was referring. In what sense is the Church in the four Welsh Dioceses an unnational Church? In what sense an anti-national Church? In no sense was it separate from the people amongst whom it had sprung, and to whom it had been a possession in all stages of their history. The sentence was entirely misleading. I say, do not, in any future schemes about Welsh nationality, or any plans about local government for Wales, do not put the new movement on a bad basis from its very beginning. I know it can be said, and is said by many politicians, that under our existing system of Parliamentary government, grievances have to be redressed. Yes, but grievances are of many kinds, and they must be judged by the sense of the whole community. There is a grievance recorded in past history, which was promptly redressed. It was Ahab's grievance about Naboth's vineyard. But we do not think much of that grievance nowadays, nor do we approve of the steps which were taken to redress it. There is only one grievance which it seems to me a man, as a man, has a right to demand the redress of, that is, any interference with his liberty. Can it be said that the existence of an Established Church, with its own endowments. in the Welsh Dioceses, constitutes

such a grievance? The consciences of those who are horrified at the sight of churches and clergymen of the Church England would not be satisfied even by the passing of the measure referred to. I do not suppose there would be a further law passed, razing churches to the ground, and compelling the clergy to wear lay attire. Unless these things were done, what solace would it be to any one to try to rob men of the endowments left by ancestors who held religious opinions differing from those who seek to take away these endowments. So long as the Parliamentary game has to be played, new nine-pins have to be put up by one side, that they may be knocked down by the other, so that the British public, looking on, may admire the dexterity and skill of both parties. But we should examine what is the reality involved in all this dexterity, and ask men to look things in the face. We have a most important interest in the fate of the four Welsh Dioceses. We were very glad that the Suspensory Bill for Wales went for nothing; we would much rather face a Disestablishment Bill in detail, and see what it amounts to. But a Disestablishment Bill for Wales means a Suspensory Bill for England. About that there can be no possible doubt. It can only mean that it is found more advantageous to deal with the Church of England piecemeal. We should have to look forward to a time when the Parliamentary representatives of three or four counties thought Disestablishment desirable, and introduced a Bill for the Disestablishment of the East Anglian Church, or the Mercian Church, or I know not what other geographical district founded on historical as-

sociations. The Disestablishment of the Welsh Church would tend to create what does not exist at present—a Welsh branch of the Church. Disestablishment would mean that the Welsh bishops would no longer be members of Convocation in the same sense as they were before. It would be an attempt to separate them from their brethren, to put them on a different footing, and make them abnormal in many ways; and if the principle were continued, the disadvantages would greatly increase. Unity is strength. The unity of the Church of England is its strength. We in these islands must be bound together as Christians; any disintegrating force from outside must be withstood. The State may split itself up into fragments —that is in its own option—but the Church must remain one, and undivided. Well, gentlemen, I can only say that, though I am not the oldest of those present, I can recall many political programmes which have been put before the country, and which have never been carried out. Fatalism in politics is the worst of all sentiments. I must confess that I hear too often the remark that certain things are inevitable, but I do not think that anything is inevitable. I do not think that the age is so sure of itself as to have any tendency which it is worth our while to pay much attention to, and therefore I say that crises arise and fall, and political programmes disappear, but principles survive, and it must be our boast always, as churchmen, that we continue to be the guardians of the principles upon which the life of the nation depends.

I have said more than enough on this subject, and I would pass on to the subjects which are before us

for discussion. I would congratulate you on the fact that they are all of a practical nature. The first subject we have to discuss is the maintenance of the clergy. I will leave others to speak about the exact facts. It must be my duty to receive advice, rather than to give it, but I would say that the maintenance of the clergy presents a difficulty, owing to the fact that the Church is coextensive with the nation. Let us keep that before ourselves. It is the great difference between the Church and any other religious organisation. It is sometimes said: "Why do not you of the Church of England do this or that? The nonconformists can do it." The answer is "Yes. The nonconformists do it, but they do it for a small recognised number of people and for a congregation." But the Church of England knows nothing of congregations as such. It covers the whole of the land. We have to consider and provide for the maintenance of ministers to cover every locality in England, and to provide that there should be no square mile of the whole surface of the land which is left devoid of clerical supervision and assistance. In large towns, of course, congregations provide more or less for their own needs, but in the country districts, in the presence of declining rents, the difficulty becomes greater and greater. There is no question that clerical distress is a very serious consideration, and I shall listen with great interest to any practical proposals, for I hope the result of our discussion will be to meet the difficulties practically in a way which will lead to permanent and substantial results.

Closely connected with the maintenance of the

clergy is the question of the maintenance of the Church schools. Great changes have occurred since the subject was first brought into prominence in 1870. I think it tolerably obvious that finality can only be reached in one of two directions. Either State aid should be given solely to secular education, all schools should be secularised so far as the State is concerned, and it should be left to voluntary effort to supply religious education; or on the other hand, the voluntary or denominational schools should enter into the existing system on an equal footing with the Board schools. We fear that neither of these proposals is very likely to be accepted just at present, but I think that with a little patience and perseverance, the time will come when the solution will be possible. Therefore, as a matter of practical politics, if we for the next few years consent to let the matter be as it is, if we show that we are determined to do the utmost that we can for religious education, then, I think, we shall stand on a sure foundation, and shall reap our reward in the future. The next Bill to be discussed is the Parochial Councils Bill. That does not concern us as Churchmen, except on one point; and that is, that we are bound to see that the definitions of Church property are clear and workable. The National Church has been trustee for the nation, and hence it comes that there have been handed over, in various times, to the safe keeping of the Church, a number of local charities. The Church holds many of them as trustee for the nation, and if the nation now thinks itself called upon to undertake the management of these charities, the Church has no objection. No clergyman has any

objection whatever to the State undertaking the management of any charity which has been left for the use of the parish as a whole. But we are justified in taking care, and in fact we must take care, that we as a Church do not suffer, because we have been used as a trustee for the nation. Do not let the nation, when it wants to take back the things that have been left in trust for the nation, take back those things that have been left in trust to us for the Church. I should like to impress upon my clerical brethren in particular, the importance of making our legal title clear to all we claim to possess. During the past year, I have been inquiring into the tenure of school buildings. I am bound to say that the result of my inquiries is to show that general trustfulness has prevailed to a remarkable extent. There are a great number of buildings, the exact title to which it would be exceedingly difficult to establish. I have asked my Rural Deans to consider the most dangerous cases as soon as possible, and try to discover if it is not possible to put them on a better footing. If any discussion of this Bill brings before us the necessity of putting our position as a Church upon a more business-like footing, to ascertain what we hold as a Church, and to ascertain our title to our respective possessions, then I can honestly say it will have done unmixed service to our Church.

And now I would commend your deliberations to the grace of Almighty God ; reminding you that the temper displayed in them is even more important than the wisdom.

PRIMARY CHARGE TO THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS OF THE DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH, 1894.

I.

MR. DEAN, CANONS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FOUNDATION OF THIS CATHEDRAL CHURCH,

In commencing a survey of the progress of my Diocese during the past three years, it is a great encouragement to me to begin with my Cathedral Church. I trust that I may take it as a symbol of much else that has been done; and that the visible growth which it has manifested in all the outward requisites for the performance of Divine Service, may be regarded as an illustration of the activity which has prevailed, in less tangible forms, throughout the rest of the Diocese.

I have been privileged to see this noble building, which we have inherited as a mighty memorial of the aspirations of previous ages, endowed with offerings which tell no less distinctly of the aspirations of our own time. Twice during the last three years have we dedicated to the service of Almighty God, with prayer and thanksgiving, splendid additions to its beauty and usefulness. The noble shell, which has been restored with loving care, has gradually been adorned with all that is needful for that dignity of Public Worship which befits the Mother Church of a Diocese. This

has been done cheerfully and willingly, as a thank-offering for spiritual blessings received within these walls, as a memorial of characters moulded into saintliness by the lessons of worship which this Church has taught. But the rapid progress made in this great work is largely due to the impulse given by the example of the late Dean Argles, whose life was an embodiment of Christian zeal and liberality. The conspicuous simplicity and loftiness of his own motives were admirably fitted to inspire others. Though many have contributed to produce the result which now fills us with thankfulness, they would all gladly recognise in him the representative and exponent of their own feelings.

In memoria eterna erit justus;
Ab auditu mali non timebit.

The name of Marsham Argles will ever be associated with the Church which he loved.

This increase of internal beauty is gratifying in itself; but it is doubly gratifying when it is regarded as the sign of increasing activity. The sense of the needs of this Church has not only called forth munificence, but has endeared it to the Diocese at large. Its position, as regards the large centres of population, places it at some disadvantage as a convenient centre of Diocesan life. But recent years have undoubtedly seen that difficulty greatly diminished by the interest which has been taken in its progressive adornment. Many notable gatherings for Diocesan purposes have been held within its walls, of which the most important was the Retreat for the Diocesan Clergy in July last. I trust that this may continue every year, and become increasingly useful. I may say that I

have received many testimonies to the inestimable value of those few days, spent in quiet meditation, with helpful direction of the mind to subjects of spiritual profit. For such a purpose, the Cathedral Church and its surroundings offer unique advantages, which were greatly appreciated, and add to that sense of corporate unity for God's service, which must always be the foundation of Diocesan loyalty and activity.

To you, Mr. Dean, personally above all others, and to every member of the Cathedral body, my warmest thanks are due for readiness to make this Church useful for every good work. I know that you are anxious to welcome every form of Diocesan organisation within these walls, and to make intelligible to all the great lessons which they teach. This Cathedral Church is, in a greater degree than most others, the Bishop's Church. This is to me a source of unmixed pleasure.

I know from experience the care which is taken, and the taste which is displayed, in the rendering of the Services. In the Dean and Canons Residentiary, I have a body of advisers, to whose counsel and help I owe much. I know that your aid is always willingly rendered, and that you are anxious to co-operate in every good and useful work. I can only again thank you all for much that has been done in the past, and I look forward with increasing hope for the future.

MY BRETHREN OF THE CLERGY, AND CHURCHWARDENS OF THE DEANERIES OF PETERBOROUGH AND OUNDLE,

The custom of Episcopal Visitations is of great antiquity, and like all ancient customs, has lost, through

social changes, much of its original usefulness. In times when communications were difficult, it was of necessity that the Bishop of a Diocese should afford, at stated intervals, an opportunity for appeals to his jurisdiction. The form of a Visitation still remains unchanged. The Bishop technically holds a Court, and, with his Chancellor, is prepared to administer justice. The Churchwardens are summoned, as representatives of the Parish, to bring to his notice any irregularities which need correction. They are a kind of jury of presentment, empannelled to report upon the condition of their Parish. A Bishop's charge is in its origin of the same nature as a Judge's charge to a Grand Jury; and, in strict propriety, ought to be confined to a reminder of the matters which a jury ought to lay before him. This form of address has long been discontinued. Luckily for himself, a Bishop's judicial authority has retired into the background. His knowledge of his Diocese is not confined to formal Visitations, but is gained by continuous correspondence and equally continuous travelling. The testimony of the Churchwardens, and the reports of the Clergy are obtained in writing before the day of Visitation. His Charge can no longer take the form of an instruction about the information to be furnished. It can only be of the nature of an address on some topics of interest, either in his Diocese, or in the Church at large.

Moreover, in the present day, the significance of any particular opportunity for expressing opinions has passed away. Advice is sought when it is needed, and opinions have to be uttered as they are formed.

Their necessity is dictated by current events; and wherever or however they are expressed, they are rapidly circulated amongst all who are interested to know them. The time is past when it is profitable to attempt, in an Episcopal Charge, a massive survey of important questions, or to influence opinion by learned investigations which are more fitted for reading at leisure than for apprehending at the moment. I was at one time disposed to omit a formal Charge altogether as an unnecessary tax on my own time, and on your patience. But second thoughts led me to the conclusion that on an occasion when the Clergy and Churchwardens were assembled together, there was at least an opportunity when some simple words of advice might be of service. The mere fact of such an assemblage is at least a sign of Diocesan organisation, and such organisation must be strengthened and increased. The very fact that opinions have to be formed and expressed under daily pressure, makes it useful to record, from time to time, deliberate convictions, to separate the greater issues from the smaller, to attempt to view things in their relative proportions, and above all else to pursue the eternal principles on which all opinions must rest.

Church and State.

The nature and scope of the general remarks, which I intend to make to you, will be best understood if they are arranged with reference to an intelligible principle. We are all deeply interested in the work of Christ's Church, and are desirous to promote it by all means in our power. Of the general nature of that

work we are assured; it is to set forth the Lord Jesus Christ. The means whereby this is to be done, He has Himself appointed. But the conditions, under which His work has to be accomplished, change from time to time; and our duty, as Christians, is to try to grasp their full significance. For the ordering of the world is from God, and the changes of human affairs depend upon the operation of His laws. It is useless to crave for other conditions than those which lie before us: it is vain to construct for ourselves an ideal of what the world ought to be in order that we may labour at our best: it is foolish to picture some state of things which, we fondly think, existed in some previous age, and act with reference to it, in the hope that by our action we may tend to realise it in the present. It is the claim of the Gospel of Christ that its message is of eternal significance, that its appeal is to man as man, and that it is independent of outward surroundings. The Church must take her stand in the actual world, and must consider her relations to things as they are. Whatever may be the features of the present time, we have to seek in them, not hindrances, but opportunities. It is to no purpose to deplore what we cannot do: it is for us to discover in what way our energy may be most profitably applied.

Now, if we consider the fortunes of the Church throughout Christendom in recent times, we see everywhere the same tendencies at work. The formula which is generally used to explain them is, that the political power of the Church has been steadily declining. I am not concerned with other branches of the Catholic Church, in whose history

this is onspicuously true. But as regards the Church of England, we must admit that such has undoubtedly been the case ; and it is worth while to appreciate the meaning of this fact.

First of all, I would point out that it is by no means a special result of forces which are working only in our own time, but is the result of a continuous process. The Christian Church was organised from the beginning, as a Catholic, or Universal Church There was no such organsiation of civil society. When our forefathers in this island became Christians they entered into an organisation which existed independently of them, and moulded their institutions into some semblance of accordance with its principles. The Church had rules for its children long before the State had laws for its subjects, and the officials of the Church gave effect to the needs of a developing civilisation before the State had any means of dealing with them. The English Nation was formed under the fostering care of the Church, which at first gave meaning to the State. But as its lessons were learned, it was natural, and it was right, that the organism of the State should grow as an expression of the natural life, and should develop capacities for dealing with its problems. I need not follow the details of this process, which consisted in transferring to the State work which had once been done by the Church; and this inevitable transference led to what are called collisions between Church and State, but which would be more accurately described as collisions between Churchmen and Statesmen. It is enough to say that the excessive centralisation of the Church, under the Papal

monarchy, put the Church at a disadvantage, in comparison with the State, as an organ of national life. The organisation of the Church was broken down by Papal aggression on Episcopal authority; the jurisdiction of the Church was upset by appeals to Rome; the whole mechanism of the Church was made cumbrous and inflexible by the paralysing influence of the Papal Court; and theological studies were restricted to the task of providing arguments for that system of which the Papacy approved. Hence the Church seemed not only cumbrous but alien, and greatly lost its spiritual force. The Reformation of the sixteenth century was an attempt to remedy a state of things which every one deplored.

The consequence of the changes then made—a consequence entirely unforeseen—was a rapid advance in national self-consciousness. I have spoken of Church and State, and the terms are generally used as though between them they comprehended all the forces which are at work on society. Really behind them both lies the Nation. The Nation means the people as a whole, with all their desires and aspirations; and by reference to their capacity for developing and expressing these desires and aspirations, the institutions, both of Church and State, may fairly be judged. The changes of the sixteenth century were due to the fact that the Church had largely ceased to be an adequate organ of the Nation. The experience of the sixteenth century showed that the State had equally failed. It has been frequently said that the Church has never succeeded in representing the Nation as a whole, and that nonconformity has become a

permanent factor of English life. The first part of this statement is undoubtedly true; the second part partakes of the nature of a prophecy, which it is our desire to prove untrue. But it is not equally recognised that the State also has failed since the seventeenth century, to be an exponent of the wishes of the Nation as a whole. We may glorify Party Government as we please: we may explain it as the supreme discovery of English intelligence to promote full discussion, and secure universal satisfaction. But the fact remains that no Government professes to give effect to the unanimous wishes of the Nation. With the growth of a higher sense of individual liberty, unanimity has ceased to be possible, and all that we can hope for in politics is the discovery of a workable basis.

I have made these obvious remarks, because their significance is frequently overlooked. It is an inevitable result of freedom that men should not all think alike, or wish for the same thing, or pursue the same methods. The State is a necessary organ of the Nation, and has to accept these facts. Its action is the resultant of the organised forces which are, from time to time, brought to bear upon it. I say "of the organised forces"; and I have no doubt that the most widely felt wishes and opinions are generally those which are best organised. But no one, conversant with the complexity of human life, would regard the results of organisation, at any particular period, as undoubtedly expressing an irresistible desire. The most abiding portions of national life are too fine and delicate to be brought within the

wide meshes of political programmes. Combinations are frequently temporary, and cries disappear as quickly as they are raised. A man is not necessarily resisting the national will, or impeding national progress, if he hesitates to accept an issue in the coarse form in which it is put before him in practical politics.

I said that the State was a necessary organ of the Nation for the arrangement of common life. It is so ordered amongst us that every man has an opportunity for expressing his opinions, and ventilating his grievances. Having done so, he must abide by the decision of the majority. All political machinery is an attempt to reach the justice and good sense which are contained in the breast of every man. To this we appeal as the nearest approach to the voice of God, which can be heard amid the tumult and temptations of life. We trust it as being, in the long run, more unselfish than any other utterance which can be made.

But if the State is a necessary organ of the Nation, so also is the Church, for its object is to keep alive, and educate into increasing sensitiveness, that sense of righteousness which alone exalteth a Nation. It is only apparently, and not really true, that the Church has declined in political importance. There was a time when the Church competed with the State as the director and executor of the Nation's wishes. The State is now the sole executor, but it has become so by ceasing to be the director. It is avowedly the exponent, rather than the educator, of the national will. The modern State has maintained its supremacy by largely abandoning any responsibility for the

contents of that will. Its main concern is with mechanism rather than with principles.

This is a position which the Church could not assume. She is concerned with principles and with principles only. So long as the Nation, in a rudimentary stage of its existence, was agreed, not only about Christian principles, but about the modes of their application, the Church was entrusted with power. It is sadly true that the Church did not escape from the corrupting influence which always attaches in some degree to the possession of power. There was a period when she resisted the transference of her power to the State, which she had gradually educated to be a more suitable organ of the national will. There was a period when the State used the Church for its own purposes, to keep down a troublesome but sturdy minority which expressed some of the noblest principles of national life. There were times when the Church was so much engaged in outward things that she was, to some degree, forgetful of her great primary duty, and her spiritual activities were crippled amid political and religious controversy. All this, in God's good Providence, has now passed away. The Church of England has learned the lesson which God has taught. She is conscious that she is but an instrument in His Hand, and that He who has entrusted to her the truth which she has to teach, and has appointed the means whereby she is to teach it—He, I say, has also prescribed the conditions within which His Work has to be done.

What then is the result of His teaching? What are the conditions which He has prescribed? God's

teaching in history is not the enunciation of new principles, but is a forcible reminder of truths which human frailty has thrust into the background. Man's weakness is shown not so much in his sins of ignorance or incapacity, as in his presumption, his arrogance, his conceit. He is always tempted to limit, for his own purposes of temporary convenience, the fulness of the Gospel of God's grace. He is tempted to improve, by human wisdom, upon God's methods. He strives to achieve outward success, and to imprison the spirit within the bonds of the letter. What the Church has been taught is briefly this,—that God works by influence not by power. The institutions of the Church were given her that she might bear a consistent testimony to the truth, that so her influence on the world might be steady and intelligible. Those institutions were permanent; they were raised above the changes and chances of this mortal life. But when they were invested with merely worldly sanctions, when they were allied with any of the fleeting forms of human devising, they were exposed to the same dangers as their allies. The Church of England has at present neither the power, nor the wish, to impose her institutions on any unwilling mind, or to exercise any other influence than that which arises from persuasion and zeal in good works. Such a position, clearly understood and frankly accepted, seems to me to be the noblest and highest which any organised body could assume.

Disestablishment.

It seems strange that, just when this result has been attained, there should still exist a desire that the Nation

should repudiate any organ for the furtherance and expression of the principles of national life. Yet this is what the cry for Disestablishment really means; and this is the main aspect of a question which concerns us as citizens even more than as Churchmen. As Churchmen, we can only demand that the matter should be thoroughly considered, and can only resolve to do our duty to the utmost as trustees to the great heritage which we think to be wrongfully attacked. But as Englishmen we feel a passionate desire to uphold the dignity of our national life, and prevent an immeasurable degradation of its ideal. That an ancient nation like England should deliberately repudiate any organic connexion between the basis of its national life and the profession of the Christian Faith seems to me to be a calamity which could never be repaired.

The main argument on which such a proposal rests is that no one religious organisation expresses exactly what everybody desires. I have already pointed out that this argument would be fatal to any form of the State. Men never did agree entirely. There was a time when disagreement was inarticulate: there was a time when it was suppressed. It is now seen that diverging opinions about the arrangement of common life are harmless and even advantageous, so long as there is a fundamental trustfulness in the general desire for order and justice. On this trustfulness our political system rests; on the belief that there are great principles of mutual goodwill which underlie definite proposals for altering the machinery of social order, and indeed give that machinery its motive power.

Those principles are largely due to the operation of the Christian religion; and its truths must always supply the nourishment of national activity. About these principles, in their bearing upon the formation of character, there is not much difference between Christian people. The differences arise concerning the method of expressing the truths on which these principles rest, of setting them forth to the world, and of applying them to the individual soul. I do not underestimate the extent of these differences, nor do I forget the historical causes from which they sprung. The differences are real, and their causes have created antagonisms which have penetrated men's modes of thought and feeling, and have forced them into an attitude of partisanship. But one thing is clear, that the differences themselves are about questions which can only be settled by patient inquiry and research, to which the spirit of partisanship presents the most serious obstacles. No one can maintain that that spirit of partisanship will be diminished by any action that can be taken by the State. The intellectual causes which keep men asunder would not be removed by Disestablishment; the causes which depend on sentiment would be indefinitely intensified. If non-conformists at present are influenced by a sense of wrong done to them in the past, I do not see what would be the gain of extending a corresponding sense of wrong to Churchmen in the future. It would be a step backwards from that better understanding which ought to be the object of our common endeavour.

It is a misfortune, inherent in all human affairs, that political questions are generally raised, not with refer-

ence to things as they are, but with reference to things as they have been. Forces, which have suffered from unequal treatment in the past, are liberated, and are desirous of pursuing their victory to some logical conclusion. There was a time in England when the State decided that national unity was only possible on the basis of religious uniformity. The State failed to secure uniformity, but discovered that outward uniformity was no longer necessary for political security, and consequently withdrew from the attempt to secure it. The nonconformists, finding themselves driven by the State in a direction in which they conscientiously objected to go, raised a cry that the State ought not to meddle with religion. Their contention was absolutely true, so far as is meant that the State ought not to exercise any coercive power over the consciences of its subjects. It is absolutely untrue when it is pressed to the conclusion, that, to secure this result, the State should be stripped of all connection with the religious life of the Nation. Yet this is the logical extreme which is being pursued. It is even erected into an axiom.

There is no political axiom which is, to me, more repugnant, because it degrades the conception of the State, which I, for one, wish to uphold at all costs. I know the axiom in its mediæval form, when Pope Gregory VII. laid down that temporal authority had its origin in the instigation of the devil, and drew the conclusion that spiritual authority was of necessity its master and director. I regard with suspicion any form in which such an opinion is revived. To me the institutions by which my country is governed are precious, and I should sorely grieve to see their claims

on my allegiance diminished. I think that every man ought to be taught to regard his citizenship as something to be prized and exercised with a full sense of conscientious responsibility. I can think of nothing so tending to debase the ideal of the State as talk about "freeing the Church from the bondage of the State". This representation of the State as something inherently unholy, something stifling to spiritual aspirations, something from which the high minded man longs to be delivered, is very dangerous teaching, and indeed is not seriously meant. But Disestablishment, or, as I prefer to call it, the repudiation of a Christian basis of the State, would go far to give real vitality to such opinions. Deplorable as this result would be, I do not see on what grounds it could be deprecated by those who rashly raise so large an issue to gain such a trivial advantage.

For it is a large issue which is raised when it is purposed that the English State should divest itself of its religious character. Religion will and must hold the chief place in the direction of the aspirations on which national life is founded. It seems to me supremely unwise, for any motives of temporary convenience, to limit permanently the sphere of the State. It seems to me dangerous to insist that the State shall know nothing of principles but shall only be concerned with machinery. I believe that, even amid present difficulties, English politics gain enormously from the existence of a National Church; and that the change in the discussion of important questions, and in the methods of government, which would follow on its removal, would be very large and far-reaching in its

consequences. The tone and temper engendered by a body which feels that it is the guardian and representative of religion, and feels also its responsibility to the nation, as a whole, is a very calculable element at the present day, is increasingly necessary as a moderating and soothing influence, and is daily developing into greater consciousness of its national mission. After all, our English institutions depend more upon tone and temper in their use than upon their inherent merits. Disestablishment would work a more abrupt change in the principles on which national cohesion rests than any other alteration in our political system.

The existing state of things in England may be logically anomalous, but corresponds with the English conception of liberty. There is a National Church recognised by the State, and by its side stand a number of voluntary organisations. Every man's liberty is respected; and though each may wish that all were of his own way of thinking, he would be wise, in my opinion, if he recognised that that result can best be pursued by discussion and persuasion rather than by endeavours for external change. I believe that a recognition of this truth is quite possible, and that it would correspond to all that is best in the new aspirations on which the England of the future will be built. At present I am thankfully conscious of the removal of many barriers to a better understanding among different Christian bodies. I think that we, on our side, are free from any feelings of ill-will, and are ready to co-operate with all for purposes which we have in common. The chief obstacle to a more rapid

progress in friendliness lies in the fact that the question of Disestablishment has entered into an acute political stage. But I remember that many political cries have exhausted themselves in one last shout, and have remained only as feeble echoes. I have every confidence in the good sense and justice of Englishmen, when it is directly applied to any particular question. The only danger at present is that the importance of this particular question should be obscured, that it should not be definitely submitted for decision on its own merits, but should, in a limited form, appear as one element in a combination which has other and less important ends in view.

The Welsh Bill.

The proposal to disestablish the Church in the four Dioceses of Wales raises a large question in a very unfortunate way. The issue is complicated by the existence of motives which it is difficult to discuss. The desire to revive nationality as a basis for a local government, the desire for social changes which are ill-defined, the wish to lay hands on some funds which may be used for experimental purposes—these are all of them powerful motives which lie behind the specious demand for religious equality. With these desires we are not concerned. They can all be gratified at a less cost than an organic change of the English State. In secular politics this would at once be urged ; but there is a danger that the significance of an ecclesiastical change should be overlooked. Yet it is obvious that the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales must carry with it the whole question of the existence of

a National Church. It is useless to say that the Church of England is not menaced, that it stands upon a different footing, and is not affected by the complications which arise from differences of race and language. If the Church in Wales is disestablished there is no longer any basis of principle left; the existence of a National Church is left as a matter to be settled by local convenience. An agitation in any group of counties might lead to a similar demand in other parts of England; and if the question was skilfully combined with other points of immediate political interest, its importance might be obscured.

We have a right to demand that so large a question should not be approached piecemeal, and should not be discussed in relation to merely local and temporary conditions. There is no ground on which the Church in Wales can be separated from the rest of the English Church. It has had no separate history since the eighth century. Long before Wales was politically united with England it was united ecclesiastically. There has been no breach in the continuity of that connexion. The attempt to represent the Church in Wales as "an alien Church," imposed upon a reluctant people, has no warrant in the facts of history. Welsh nonconformity is largely a creation of the early years of this century; and the ground of its present animosity against the Church is not that it is negligent of the needs of the Welsh-speaking population, but that it is too active. That there was a period of such negligence cannot be denied. And it is sadly true, in history, that the children bear the burden of the carelessness of their fathers, institutions are challenged,

not when they are at their worst, but when they are putting forth new vigour. The reproach of the past is fixed upon them lest it be forgotten. Haste is made to demand their condemnation, on evidence which is no longer true, but is still specious.

I have made these remarks to you, because I think you would all wish to have clearly before you the grounds on which you stand as regards this question. If the Nation wishes to consider whether or no it shall continue to possess a religious basis for its national life, we Churchmen do not deprecate the discussion. Let the question be clearly stated on its own merits, and let a due measure of time be devoted to setting the matter on its real basis. But we resolutely object to confusing the question of the existence of a National Church with that of the desirability of a larger measure of local self-government in a particular district. The unity of the English Church, established or disestablished, is to us a matter of supreme importance. It is useless to tell us that we in England might leave Wales to settle its own affairs. We cannot remain unconcerned when a proposal is made to dismember the National Church. We urge, and we are entitled to urge, that this is a question with which every one is concerned. I have already referred incidentally to the great moral principle on which popular government must rest: that is, on the appeal to the sense of justice and righteousness which God has implanted in the heart of every man. But the appeal must be made, if the rightness of the answer is to be recognised on a clear and definite issue. Discussion and delay are of service only as they procure that result. We are

justified in this matter in striving our utmost to see that the question is fairly put. To endeavour to procure this is an end in itself, which lies outside party politics. The practical politician would be the first to own his dissatisfaction at the form in which many questions come within the province of his activity. We who feel strongly that a great principle is at stake need have no scruple in urging our conviction, and can appeal to all parties to sympathise with our endeavour to set that principle in the first place.

It is with a sense of sadness that I close my remarks on this subject. Very willingly would you and I pursue our work for Christ in peace, undisturbed by such controversy. There is perhaps no greater trial to our faith than that which comes when we realise that our attempts to do God's work in what we believe to be God's way, expose us to the animosity, not of the unbelieving and the ungodly, but of those who call themselves by the name of Christ. We are tempted to say, "Let us, at any cost, be free from this antagonism: let us abandon anything that stands in the way of godly union and concord". A moment's reflection shows us that such a course is impossible, and that it would be delusive. We cannot abandon our responsibilities as trustees of a great institution, intimately associated with our national life, unless we are convinced that the change is in itself wise and right. Nor can we hope that any outward change would extinguish animosity, or that the removal of one alleged grievance would bring lasting peace. Many more questions would be raised by Disestablishment than would be settled by it; we should still be left with many posi-

tions to defend, and grounds for misunderstanding would be indefinitely increased. The search for grounds of agreement would retire into the background before the perpetually increasing need for organised resistance. It is our duty amid the complications of this world's affairs, to accept humbly the task which God has given us for our probation. In upholding the Church, we are not striving for ourselves, nor need we be too anxious to commend ourselves to the fleeting fashions of this world's thought or endeavour. We are upholding the framework of a divinely ordered institution, which in itself can admit of no change, but is endowed with endless adaptability, because it has the promise of the abiding presence of its Lord and Master. We must admit the shortcomings of our forefathers, and must deplore our own. We must learn to labour in such a way that men may see "what manner of spirit we are of". We must strive to remove every pretext for misunderstanding, and approve ourselves as being, in very truth, the ministers of God. We must be quick to discern all that is good and noble in current objects of endeavour. We must be superior to prejudice, and when "reviled, revile not again". We must carry with us into every field of our activity the fruits of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness and goodness"—for these are the witnesses to the truth of our message.

Any survey of the past, however slight, ought to convince us of human frailty, and of the wrongs which it has done to the Gospel of God's grace. Most grievous is it to see in the past how human arrogance or selfishness has found its way into the Church, and has wrought

immeasurable ill. Let us give humble thanks that we are free from the temptations which marred so many lofty characters in the past. Let us rejoice that the weapons of our warfare are those of earnest sympathy and kindly persuasion. It would be a worthy object of our endeavour to change the sense which attaches in current literature to the phrase, "the ecclesiastical temper". Surely we know no temper, save the temper of our Lord. It is because I fervently believe that the present position of the Church of England, in its relation to the State and to Society, affords a splendid opportunity for bringing religion to bear upon every relation in life, that I deplore the possibility of any change. The influence of the Church, its responsibility, its sense of a mission, these are inherent in its own nature. Nothing can either add to or take from them. But the sphere and method of its influence must depend upon the nature of its relationship to the community in which it works. My contention is that the relationship, which now exists in England, is practically in accordance with the genius of English institutions, and is fruitful of great promise for the future.

This truth must be embodied in our outward activity. Our inward life is lived with God in the humble effort to engrave upon our hearts the mark of the Lord Jesus. Our services and our teaching are directed to build up the members of Christ, committed to our charge, into a consistent body of witnesses to the truth, "as it is in Jesus". The world may go its way, and ring its changes; but the commission to Christ's people remains unaltered, "Ye are the light of the world: ye are the salt of the earth". It is for us to

make clear that illuminating power, to make vital that cleansing activity. We can only ask God's forgiveness for our past failures, and pray Him to send us forth again with a deepened sense of our responsibility towards all men, as the followers of Him who "took on Himself the form of a servant". May He of His infinite mercy renew in us that spirit of service, and use us for His blessed will.

II.

BRETHREN OF THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS OF THE DEANERIES OF CHRISTIANITY, AKELEY, SPARKENHOE AND GOSCOTE,

It is natural for me in taking a survey of my Diocese for the first time to consider the changes which have taken place in the clerical staff during the last three years. In so doing it is somewhat significant to note that during that time I have instituted new incumbents in no fewer than thirteen of the twenty-seven parishes contained in the Deanery of Christianity, while the vacancies in the hundred and six parishes comprised in the other deaneries have only amounted to eighteen. This fact is significant of the pressure at which the work in Leicester is carried on, and of the rapidity with which it exhausts physical power. Few of the clergy in a large town are able to do what they feel ought to be done for a long number of years in succession. Few of them are privileged to end their days in the place which they loved so well, and in the discharge of that work to which they had devoted their life's energies. The labour is so perpetual and

so exacting that it admits of little relaxation, and leaves no margin for failing power. The sense of personal responsibility does not diminish. No organisation can be so complete, no relationship between pastor and people can be so perfect, that it can long survive the withdrawal of actual presence and personal supervision. A changing population, constantly increasing, presents new problems, which have to be faced as they arise. One who is not always seen is soon forgotten. The man who becomes incapable of facing the daily strain is reluctantly driven to the conclusion that he must make way for another. Constant effort is required, and it is difficult to accumulate a store of reserved force. Such is the overwhelming nature of the work in a large and increasing town.

I have dwelt upon this because it is a point worthy of attention. I know the regret with which many have severed their connection with Leicester ; but they felt that the severance either was, or soon would be, inevitable. I would say, on their behalf, what they would have wished to say for themselves, because I think that Leicester may be proud of the devotion which it inspires in those who labour for its welfare ; and the sight of that devotion has been full of deep pathos to myself.

It is natural that to-day I should have this town in my mind, and its problems before me. My brethren from the country will pardon me if I do not attempt a survey which the number of parishes would render tedious, and if I address myself to some considerations which, while they particularly concern great centres of industrial life, should have an universal application.

The Church and Society.

The work which Christ committed to His Church was a spiritual work. Its sphere was in the hearts and consciences of men. But men live together in society; and the individual life is closely bound up with the lives of others. Men live a common life, and the promptings of natural wisdom have always led mankind to endeavour to arrange that common life according to some principle of natural justice. All human laws and institutions are the means whereby the ideas of justice prevalent in the community are expressed and applied. It is obvious that any spiritual influence which profoundly affects the individual soul must deepen his sense of justice, and make him increasingly sensible of the claims of others. The religion of Jesus Christ from the beginning exercised this influence in a marked way. The Incarnation was felt to obliterate all arbitrary and conventional differences between man and man. It was made known that "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all and in all". This was the eternal truth about human society. Distinctions were abolished; all men were equal in the equality of one all-embracing brotherhood.

But though this was ideally true, it was hard to realise; for the mass of men were sunk in the selfishness of paganism, and the Christian spirit could only work slowly on the hard and callous world. But that spirit has always been working, with greater or less power, as the testimony of the Church was strong or weak. For there were times when the outward organi-

sation of the Church was incorporated with the world, and when its spiritual influence consequently was small. There never was a time when the spirit of Christian liberty did not speak through individuals and societies, giving hope and encouragement, and pointing towards the ideal end of aspiration. In Christian lands the individual never lost the consciousness of his worth; and the pressure upon civil society to expand its conception of justice, and enlarge the boundaries of its operation was steady and continuous. This is the one great fruitful principle which can be recognised in the history of Christian times. The true progress that can be traced is a progress towards liberty. This lends dignity to many wasteful struggles. It compensates for many grievous losses. It accounts for many melancholy failures. Ideals, institutions, organisations perished; but the sense of liberty grew stronger through their downfall. Church and State alike suffered many disasters. But Church and State alike were made for man; and mankind grew in dignity even by the misfortunes of its natural protectors and guardians.

It is then a truth that all institutions must do their work in accordance with the admitted needs of man. The Church of Christ, possessing as it does an eternal commission, being witness to the Person of the Lord, must set forth that Person as the one answer to the questionings of man's heart. It is not without God's will that these questionings arise. It is for us to deal with them according to the wisdom and power which God has given us. Let us see what is our position as Christians towards some of the questions which now are uppermost.

Liberty is the inalienable possession of man ; liberty to express himself, to speak out his thoughts, to become all that he can become, to find scope for his powers, to develop his spiritual capacities. But there is in actual practice the difficulty of adjusting each man's claim for himself with the equally valid claim of every one of his fellows. This is the problem which society has to solve, and on its solution social well-being depends. Liberty is frequently regarded as if it were only a right ; but it is also a serious responsibility. The great question for the modern world to determine is, how men are to be fitted to bear the heavy burden of liberty. When my place is allotted to me, when I act under authority, discharge my appointed work and receive my appointed reward, life is comparatively simple. But when my place is left to be determined by my own efforts, when I undertake to be arbiter of my own duties, when I decide how much shall be my labour and what its recompense, I must carefully scan the conditions of life as a whole, and must learn to keep an open mind and a sensitive conscience.

Now, if we regard the results of the manifold variety of suggestions, of schemes, of practical activity, and of definite organisations which exist at the present day, we see that they all spring from the consciousness of a liberation of human faculties, from a keen desire to bring every man's life within the sphere of the best influences which man's wit and man's wisdom have discovered. It is true that there is a bewildering fertility of suggestiveness. But this is no unwholesome sign. It is true that some of the suggestions are crude. But Utopia has existed at all times, and

though it be not found, the attempts to find it are fertile of results, as were the voyages to discover Cathay and El Dorado. We need not be afraid of ideal systems. All human efforts are conditioned by the imperfection of human agents. It is easy, in the retirement of the study, to make the small assumption that a change in the outward conditions of human life will at once produce an increase of human capacity. Alas, the first steps in actual practice show us that change is slow in coming, that human nature is stubborn and unyielding, that it cannot be remodelled from without, but must develop from within. Social progress is conditioned by moral progress. The saying of Montesquieu, "A Republic is founded on virtue," is insuperably true; and the virtue of a community rests upon its religion. Law will never be welcomed, never be reverenced, unless it is felt that "its seat is the bosom of God, and its voice the harmony of the world". Proposals for amendment may be made, are made in this imperfect world, in the form of attacks on existing arrangements, and are often founded on claims which may be urged in terms merely of class selfishness. It is the function of the community to do its best to eliminate selfishness from the arguments on both sides, to insist on the case being submitted on the ground of justice, and then to embody its decision in an extended application of recognised principles. Only such a decision will become binding on men's consciences and not merely enlist for a time a reluctant submission to compulsion.

The organ of the community for this important

purpose is the Church, which must always be the guardian, the educator and the exponent of the national conscience. This fact is being increasingly recognised, and the opinion of Christians is more and more required on all claims which are put forward and all schemes which are devised, for the amelioration of the conditions of human life.

Now if we look at the past we see that in former times the influence of the Church was steadily exercised in the form of amending the inequalities of defective social arrangements. The Church, possessing its own conception of the value of man, strove to supplement the action of society, or redress its deficiencies. It did so by providing what the State was unable to provide—schools, universities, hospitals almshouses and the like. In this way it gradually enforced upon the State a higher conception of duty towards the community as a whole. Thus the whole fabric of the Poor Laws grew up round the alms contributed in Church by Christian men for the relief of the sick and the indigent. The State took over this work of the Church, and made binding on all by law the obligation which the Church had enforced on the consciences of her children. But though the State has undertaken some branches of this work, others are still left to private and voluntary beneficence, which the Church must always stimulate and direct. Moreover, new directions for Christian activity are always being discovered, new lines of work are continually being opened out. Efforts for redemption and reclamation, for the removal of temptations and for the promotion of orderly habits, carry on the

pursuit of social welfare into regions where the State is entirely unable to follow. The position of the Church as a pioneer remains, and always must remain, unchanged. It is in the very nature of things quite impossible to bring under State regulation the manifold impulses of human nature, or to make State provision for its various needs.

But though this part of the work of the Church still exists, as pressing and as important as ever, we cannot rest content with simply following on these old lines. The process of the liberation of human faculties, which I have already explained, has made society as a whole anxious to enter upon a larger heritage of which it has had the promise. The question is asked: "Why should not many of these amending agencies of former times be rendered permanent by their incorporation into the social system? Society has needed Christian charity to redress its inequalities in the past; why should not society revise its system so as to take that charity into its sphere? Why should we amend from without and not reorganise from within?" With such a demand, conceived in such a spirit, every one must cordially sympathise. There can be no nobler task, no more truly Christian task, than to garner the results of Christian experience and incorporate them into the system of our common life. It must, however, be admitted that the process is bound to be gradual, and that each step in it requires discussion, which is sometimes carried on in terms of struggle and conflict, by weapons which the Church cannot use, and in a language which the Church cannot speak.

Let me explain my meaning more fully. The fabric of human society has come into being slowly. It represents the best attempts of man's wisdom to arrange the details of common life. This wisdom is in each particular age scanty and limited. Sometimes it has been possessed only by a few, who have not always proved superior to the temptation to use their gifts to some degree for their own advantage. It has always been applied to the solution of questions which were pressing. Any social system changes only under pressure, for this obvious reason—so much human energy is required to maintain what exists that, without good cause shown, it is not easily diverted to make re-adjustments. In fact, men are so occupied with life as it is that some powerful impulse is necessary to direct their attention to what life might be. A new impulse has been given in our day by a larger diffusion of knowledge, and the consequently increased power of expression. I said that society was arranged by the best of man's wisdom. The number of those who can form and express opinions has vastly increased. There are numerous demands, and still more numerous suggestions of the means of satisfying them. Great causes are pleaded at the bar of public opinion, and an immediate verdict is required. Questions are raised which go to the very foundation of social life, and seem to threaten sweeping change with perilous rapidity.

It must be remembered that society is the product of man's conscious or unconscious endeavour to provide for the needs of common life. I do not know that change is more inevitable because it is asked for,

or that it is more dangerous because it is made consciously. Change and adjustment there have always been; we sometimes speak as though nothing ever happens save what is formally discussed and voted upon. The most important changes which affect society are those which are unperceived and unrecognised till they have been accomplished. Man can do little more by his arrangements than take note of an accomplished fact. Changes in the structure of society cannot be made rapidly; they are limited by the average capacity to discharge the increased responsibility which they involve They are tested at every step by their immediate results, and slight mistakes rapidly generate counteracting influences. The balance of forces in human society is almost as delicate as the equilibrium established in the realm of nature. It may be analysed and discussed, but it cannot be summarily altered from outside. Proposals for change may erect themselves into the dignity of systems; they are but expressions of tendencies, which will be powerful only so far as they are willingly recognised and accepted by the conscience of the community. There is, I think, no real ground for fear of rash or precipitate change in the fabric of society.

I spoke of the pressure which was necessary to induce society to discuss any question concerning its actual order. This pressure can only come from the generation of new forces, or from the collection and organisation of existing forces into definite activity. The perception of such a pressure is rarely welcomed at once; for it calls to fresh exertion, and bids men look beyond the maxims which have hitherto been

enough to direct them. It is a summons to think, and thinking is always painful. We are always erecting barriers, and enclosing little spots, where we may dwell in intellectual peace, masters of a little world which we have thought out for ourselves. It may not be. The great world surges outside, destroys our palings, breaks in upon our quiet, and asserts that its claims alone are real. It is an accusation sometimes made against Christians that they are too much immersed in the little sphere within which they are striving to lead a protected life; that they are unduly heedless of the cries which are raised around them; that they are indisposed towards new movements, and are not quickly sympathetic with new aspirations.

Now, I am willing to make the greatest allowance for the truth contained in this assertion, which I think needs careful examination. First of all, I cannot deny that it is possible to be selfish in religion; that a man who has found peace for his own soul wonders that every one else does not follow his exact example, sets a supreme value on his own experience, and emphasises that as the solution for every one's troubles. This is a possibility which we have always to keep before us. The richer we know the fruits of our own intellectual or spiritual efforts to have been for ourselves, the more we are disposed to offer them, and them only, as our contribution to the needs of others. Yet we must remember that our own experience ought to result in the possession of principles which are of infinite power of application; and we ought to be able to apply the love of God, which we feel in our

hearts, to any problem which is put before us. A Christian is above all things bound to be studiously humble. We can always learn from the world's criticism—it may be severe, but is to some extent just. We should have some sort of answer to give to any question which is raised; we can only regret our own incompetence when we are silent. But, in the next place, it must be admitted that questions are not always raised in the first instance in a form on which conscience can decide. They appear in a controversial shape, and the statements, it may be on both sides, are crude and exaggerated. It is sometimes difficult to find the exact principle of justice, to disentangle the ultimate and the proximate aim. Moreover, it is to be remembered that the Church is, in a special sense, the guardian of all the good that already exists in society. She knows with what difficulty our existing possessions have been acquired, because she knows the extent of the dominion of sin. She cannot put aside the truth about human nature and its inherent frailty. She knows how much care is necessary to maintain even the standard of moral and spiritual effort which now prevails. She wishes to arrange new aspirations according to possible principles of regular and orderly growth. She feels bound to invite new ideas to put forward their best side, to attach themselves to great and admitted truths, to submit to the restraints which are necessary for youthful petulance in individuals and systems alike.

Now, I believe that it is on steadfastly exercising this purifying and sifting influence that the great work of the Church of Christ for human society depends.

Let all men think, and observe, and speak. Let them consider it a duty to put forward for the common good the best they know, the highest they think. But let them do so with a sense of responsibility, and let them rest their claims on demonstrable justice. This is the basis of our political system; the danger attaching to this system is that the element of justice should be slurred over or assumed, and that the decision should be made by a clash of contending interests. The consciousness of the Christian Church stands between the promulgation of schemes and their political accomplishment. It calls upon "interests" on both sides to discard selfishness. It endeavours to form a tribunal where the public conscience shall sit as judge. The beneficence of this endeavour is obvious. No legal decision is conclusively binding which does not carry with it the approval of the common conscience. No system can prevail which assumes that man is other than he is. No body of men can be compelled to do what they do not think to be right and acknowledge as such.

Social Problems.

The social problems of the present day are in their nature economic. They are concerned with the more equal distribution of material advantages. On the general principle, that it is desirable to distribute them as largely as possible, there is no disagreement among right-minded men. The question is how far it is possible to distribute them, and how experiments can best be made to determine this point. It is obvious that wealth must be produced before it can be distri-

buted ; and experiments in the mode of its distribution must not be such as to interfere disastrously with its production. Hence experiments have to be made cautiously, in detail, and with reference to particular facts. These facts, moreover, are in their nature hard to determine ; they are complicated ; they cannot be isolated, but are interwoven with a huge and somewhat artificial system. None but those who have given attention to the particular question which is raised can justly venture to express a decided opinion. The organisation of labour, or of capital, is for the purpose of training expert opinion on one side, and of acting upon that opinion on the other side. It sometimes happens that the conflict of opinion has to be decided by a disastrous appeal to the power of endurance on both sides. At such times we are all oppressed by the sense of the limitations of human forethought ; our conscience is shocked by the occurrence of strife. There is a temptation to express a rash judgment on the points at issue. But a Christian is not necessarily an economist ; if he were, he would probably know that he was entirely incapable of judging in this particular case ; that judgment required a mass of minute knowledge which he did not possess and could not hastily acquire.

Has he, therefore, no part to play? I venture to think that there is much which he can do. He may not be able to help intellectually in settling the dispute ; but he can greatly influence the temper in which it is conducted. He can sympathise with those who are concerned ; and I do not think that the sorrow and suffering is entirely on one side. The

dislocation of human relationships is a severe trial. The sense of helplessness before forces which seem as stern and unapproachable as are the forces of inanimate nature, is hard to bear. The feeling of individual sacrifice to maintain a principle with a resolute, orderly, unimpassioned mind, is an enormous demand on human nature. The voice which says "Sirs, ye are brethren," is a grateful reminder of a necessary truth, which sometimes threatens to escape. The pressure of the hand which recognises the gravity of the situation carries sustainment. The sympathetic criticism which pleads: "You struggle for a principle; keep that principle unsullied by passion; I cannot say if you are intellectually right in your end, but I can judge if you are morally right in your means"; this is the support which keeps men true to their best selves, and makes for peace. It is the function of the Church to turn men's hearts towards one another; it is through the maintenance of an attitude of mutual good feeling than an agreement can most surely be reached. What was impossible on the ground of reason, operating only on the facts before it, becomes possible under the stimulus of quickened sympathy. New hopefulness is engendered; new conditions are discovered; new experiments are worth trying because the germs of new capacities, hitherto latent come into view. Surely this is the inner meaning which we are justified in extracting from the melancholy process of a strike. "We wish for a higher standard of life," is the claim of the worker. "It is impossible, as things are, to alter the condition of labour," is the answer of the employer. The conflict compels both sides to look

deeper into things, to discover new possibilities, to devise new adjustments, to develop a resourcefulness, an inventiveness, unknown before. The conclusion finally arrived at is that which is dictated by actual facts; but in the process it may be that the facts have been modified by new additions, or have assumed a new aspect by a change of attitude towards them.

Surely it is the duty of Christian men to seek out and to manifest the permanent significance of passing events, to discover their fruitful principles and to exhibit them in their inward and abiding meaning. For this purpose the Christian must avoid partisanship, and must seek for that quiet wisdom which comes from the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit of God. In all ages there is a desire for the *vir pietate gravis*, whose utterance may compose discord. It is true that in the heat of discussion there are loud cries for active help instead of kindly sympathy. Men need an ally, not a dispassionate adviser. They exclaim "What is the Church doing?" They demand that the judgment of conscience should be entirely on their side. But no fair judgment can be given without a careful sifting of facts; and it is facts which are in dispute. When the cry is raised that the Church should pronounce an opinion, the term *Church* is generally used to mean the clergy who, I need not remind you, are not the Church, but merely its officers. Now, the clergy are as a rule, from the mere nature of their vocations, the class in the community which is least versed in business affairs. They are little suited, as a body, to decide economic questions. They have the most ardent desire to promote

the welfare of their people; but this desire does not enable them always to judge decisively that any particular scheme for that purpose is immediately practicable. I believe that this obvious truth is generally understood. I believe that what men of all kinds of opinion would all join in advising, is benevolent neutrality in trade disputes, constant helpfulness in alleviating inevitable distress, outspoken criticism of all unfairness, and unswerving maintenance of the great principle of justice.

The Christian Church is the necessary link which binds men together. It is the great guarantee for peaceful progress. I would urge my brethren to learn all that they can of the actual facts of the occupations of those amongst whom they labour; to discover their aims, and to apply to all impartially the tests of Christian morality. The great need of our day is that all human relationships should be first moralised and then spiritualised. For this great end we need not only good intentions, but knowledge and wisdom. I am convinced that what we need is greater knowledge, and more thoughtfulness, to make zeal more effective. As society becomes more complex every form of activity has to be more specialised, and has to be founded upon a careful study of details. Legislation can only follow slowly upon the development of the national conscience. Christian zeal on the other hand is always in the van, and is striving to occupy new regions. Before society can turn its attention to subjects, religious minds are slowly bringing them into prominence. When questions have once entered within the sphere of politics, religion

may leave them to the conscience which she has educated. The Christian claims no reward, not even that of recognition of his labours. The practical intelligence of the world may shape them and may glory in its cleverness. It may emphasise the difference between the political deftness of humanitarian effort, and the long, obscure and bungling process of Christian charity. We neither murmur nor repine. We only marvel to see in the world's progress new opportunities for the Church, new calls to apply in new places the healing power of the Redemption wrought for all men by the Lord. The world is growing sadly conscious that it cannot cure the wounds which it inflicts. Its eyes are more and more fixed upon the Church, whose attitude and actions are closely scanned.

My brothers, can you walk in the streets of this great town and not feel the burden of the work which is entrusted to you? Few, far too few, are the labourers: scanty are the means at their command. I would that there were more clergy, and that they were better supplied with equipment. I would that they were freer from anxiety about material organisation. I would that the laity relieved them more than at present. I know what good service is rendered to good works by many busy men. I know how much self-sacrifice is shown. But is there not room for more? Great is the labour, but it is blessed. It is God's work, and He who gives us eyes to see it will give us power to perform it. We can only commit ourselves entirely to Him, and so take courage.

III.

Brethren of the Clergy and Churchwardens of the Deaneries of Guthlaxton, Gartree and Framland.

The Church and Education.

The question of education is one in which the Church must always have an abiding interest, not so much in particular details as in its essential principles. There are many questions which are questions of administrative detail; but education is founded on principles, of which the Church is in a sense the guardian. The Church, as soon as it was organised, made education one of its chief aims; and every branch of the existing system of our national education grew up under the shadow of the Church, and under her direction. The progress of society has gone along the line of differentiation of functions. The work of the Church has been to train the national conscience to an increasingly high conception of its duties. When the nation has been educated by the Church up to a sufficient point, it shows its consciousness of the advance which it has made by taking over from the Church the work which it has hitherto done and transferring it to the State. This is a natural process, and one which we as Churchmen gladly welcome. We are always ready that any branch of our work for society should be taken over by the great organ of the State, or by voluntary societies. Thus the care of the poor, as a systematic obligation, passed three centuries ago to the State; and the care of the sick in hospitals has been taken over by voluntary bodies.

But these are matters of administrative detail, and raise no difference of opinion about the methods to be followed or the principles on which they rest. It is to be regretted that about education there exists a difference of opinion, which was recognised from the first. The first step in making education national was that the Church, together with all other religious bodies, was regarded as an agent of the State, and received subvention from the State for educational purposes. The Act of 1870 proposed that all existing schools should continue as they were, and that the State should supplement them by providing means for the compulsory supply of schools in districts where population was rapidly increasing.

The voluntary system and the State system were to exist side by side, and were to influence one another beneficially. This to a large extent has been the case.

The rapid development of general interest in education, following upon the introduction of a universal system, is a matter for thankfulness and pride. We rejoice that England has recognised the rudiments of education as necessary for every member of the community, and has placed them at the disposal of all. We regard such a result as a worthy token of enlightened conscientiousness, and of a quickened sense of universal obligation. In the next place, this general increase of interest in education has produced greater attention to educational methods, and to the conditions in which education can best be conducted. In this also we rejoice, and our desire for educational efficiency is keen. It is true that changes come quickly, that experiments are costly. But it cannot be too clearly

stated that the managers of voluntary schools are just as much interested in all than can promote educational progress as are the members of a School Board. It is, however, obvious that members of a body which has behind it the unlimited resources of the public purse are not likely to be so critical of new experiments as are those who have to render an account to voluntary subscribers. Men pay their rates in a total sum and shrug their shoulders; but they wish to know the reasons of every part of a scheme for which they are required to give a voluntary contribution. I may remark in passing, that this fact alone seems to me to constitute one great reason for the maintenance of voluntary schools. They not only diffuse, but create, an interest in the progress of education, to a degree which no purely official system could achieve. The members of a Board bow before the decision of a central authority; the managers of a voluntary school sometimes criticise, not it may be the abstract wisdom of its decree, but its applicability to the conditions of their particular school.

It is quite natural and right that the large results gained by observation and comparison all over the country should be garnered by the central authority of the State, and that their lessons should be applied. So far as this concerns educational standards and methods no difficulty arises. But the question of the conditions under which education can best be carried on not unnaturally raises differences of opinion. The new schools have been built on better plans than those which are of older date. School buildings are subjected to much wear and tear. The majority of

voluntary schools were built for a smaller number than that which they now accommodate; they have been extended to meet increasing needs, till in some cases the capacities of their site seem to be exhausted. It is always a difficult question to decide when a building ought to be renewed; it is natural that official decisions are not always accepted without a murmur. But I do not think it fair to represent these murmurs, which often spring from local sentiment, as an opposition to educational progress on the part of the managers of voluntary schools. A parallel instance occurs to my mind in a matter which is within the experience of my brethren of the clergy. The Diocesan Surveyor for dilapidations is elected by the votes of the clergy themselves; but his decisions are not on that account accepted without a murmur. The opinion of an outgoing tenant about his house by no means coincides with that of the incomer. In many cases both sides feel just a little aggrieved, and express their grievance. But I do not conclude from that that the clergy are indifferent to the repair of ecclesiastical buildings.

In point of fact, many of the requirements made by the Educational Department are sanitary requirements; and no subject admits of greater difference of opinion or invites more costly experiments. Yet on the other hand, nothing is more important for the well-being of the race; and I think that the educational influence of school life passed under wholesome and carefully selected conditions is of very great importance. If we look forward, as we do, to education as a means of bringing home to every family the best results of the common wisdom, then we must

consider that everything which is under the direction of the community should be above reproach. It is most important that school buildings, their plant and their arrangements should be adapted to teach neatness, carefulness and modesty. We certainly wish that our voluntary schools should be as good as possible, and that every locality should have the right to be proud of its school buildings.

We have arrived at a period when, owing to a number of causes—the introduction of free education, the effect of time on our buildings, the heightening of the standard of educational requirements—there is a decided pressure felt on the resources of voluntary schools. It is unfortunate, though inevitable, that these causes should have coincided, so that their joint pressure is felt at the same time. This has given rise to an uneasy feeling about the future, which I believe to be exaggerated. It is supposed that this pressure will be continuous, whereas I hold that it has nearly reached its highest point. Compulsory and free education has exercised its full influence on the number of children to be provided for. The requirements of building accommodation must bear a relation to the actual facts of life; and I think that these requirements will not mount much higher. I do not regard them as excessive at present; and I entirely fail to see in the desire expressed by the Education Department to make these requirements universal, any trace of a policy to raise an undue standard of efficiency. Again, I say it is unfortunate that so much has to be done at once; but if we set to work and do it, I think that we shall soon settle down for a period of peaceful

work, during which I hope that something of the nature of a sinking fund will be started in connection with every school.

At all events, I am quite sure that voluntary schools must be above all suspicion of standing in the way of educational efficiency.

I have spoken about this matter as far as regards the material aspect. But there is no doubt that this continued pressure for pecuniary support has fallen with such unequal incidence, especially in places where a School Board rate is levied, that there is some objection to the continued maintenance of two systems, one voluntary and the other rate-supported. The question is raised, Is it worth while?

The reason why the Church has maintained her schools is simply because she did not think herself justified in abandoning her own view of education and of her duty towards it. Her view was not, and could not be, quite identical with that of the State. The State from its nature can go no farther than prescribe such requirements as all are agreed upon as desirable for its citizens. Now Englishmen are agreed that a knowledge of the Christian religion is the chief of these requirements; but unfortunately they are not agreed as to the exact form in which Christianity shall be taught. This difficulty was a real difficulty which no one wished to extenuate. The Church continued her own schools as a security for the religious teaching of her own children. Was she right in so doing? Has anything in the experience of the last twenty years led us to think that we were needlessly scrupulous and careful?

Now in religion, education is more strongly marked off from instruction than it is in secular subjects. Provided that a child is taught to read and write, the mode by which the result is attained is of secondary importance. I do not say that the mode is of *no* importance; it may, of course, have great educational value, and may carry with it lessons which go beyond its immediate scope. But the *instruction* is of value in itself, however it is obtained, and is a permanent possession which raises one who has it to a higher level of capacity. The same cannot be said of the contents of religious teaching. In religion instruction cannot well be separated from education. Let me take an extreme case to illustrate my meaning. I can conceive of religious topics being taught in such a way as to produce excellent results in an examination, and yet to inspire repugnance in the mind of the learner. This is an extreme and improbable case; but it illustrates the point which I wish to enforce. Religious teaching is not, and cannot be, confined to some part of the instruction given in a school. We all admit that the most important part of education is the formation of character. Now, character is only influenced by character; and the mode in which influence is exerted is by the exhibition of principles operative in their application to particular needs. The whole question of discipline depends on the attitude of the teacher towards the children as human beings. There is in every lesson, no matter what the subject may be, a perpetual appeal, unconscious I admit, to some motive in the child's mind. The appeal, I say, is unconscious, but its effect is cumulative; and the most important

effect of any educational system is the general attitude towards life which it has inculcated.

It may be said that this is over subtle; that it is an application of principles, which are true in the more advanced forms of education, to the simpler forms where they cannot be sufficiently developed to be powerful. The maxim *De minimis non curat lex* is a statement of human limitations: if we said *De minimis non curat Deus* we should be speaking blasphemy. Everything that concerns the development of a child's mind and character is of supreme importance; and that character is undoubtedly the result of all the influences to which it has been subjected. The outward activities of life are constantly disguising the real meaning of actions. There is a difference, which will not only be revealed hereafter, but which works itself out in its effects here and now, between the man whose life is built on a belief in the Lord Jesus, and the man whose life is built on any other basis. The outward aspect of the activity of the two men may be equally satisfactory; but their tendencies diverge, and they generate different forces. Society, let us remember, is the crude expression of the forces which are generated by its individual members. Every man, in spite of outward agreement or disagreement, looks towards Christ, or he does not. We may overestimate or we may underestimate particular methods of so doing; but the efforts of society depend upon the goal of those who make them.

This, then, is the reason why we wish to preserve education on Christian principles, and see in it something more than a matter to be decided by considera-

tions of present convenience. We do not overlook all that is said in favour of escaping from present difficulties by accepting a universal system of secular education from the State, to be supplemented by a religious education from various Christian bodies. But we deprecate the separation between religion and life which would thus be emphasised alike in the eyes of teacher and taught. The method of dichotomy has always an appearance of simple justice; but the proposal of Solomon to apply it to a living organism revealed the true parent. Doubtless her preference for unity partook of the nature of obstruction. The Church must run the same risk of misrepresentation in her desire to be the true mother of her children.

So then, I am convinced that we are doing a real service to the community by holding fast to our Church schools. The pressure is severe; the difficulties are many; the labour is hard; the future is uncertain. But the object is worthy; and we act in a missionary spirit. We are not striving in the interests of the Church as one out of many religious organisations; but we are struggling for Christianity and we are struggling for education. We do not wish, if we can help it, to see the abiding interests of either of these great causes sacrificed to temporary difficulties. I call them temporary, because no one can say that the existing situation corresponds to the expectations or wishes of the community. It has come about by a series of accidents; and the only danger is that the trouble of disentangling complications should lead to a desire to solve them in the simplest and shortest, rather than in the wisest, way. At present the teaching

of religion in Board schools is a matter of frequent dispute. It is identified with political questions, which have no real connexion with it. It is settled by reference to principles which are not related to religion. Principles, in fact, have been turned upside down ; and at present many who once maintained general principles in a too abstract way, do not know how to escape from the unwelcome results which they have brought. The desire to prevent any one Christian body from being unduly favoured has practically led to the favouring of the smallest and least Christian body ; and many earnest Christian men still express themselves satisfied with this result, simply because it is the logical conclusion of the principles which they unwisely advocated. The pursuit of undenominationalism has led to the omission of every truth about which there was a difference of opinion, till nothing is left but Unitarianism. Christian men cannot long face this fact with any semblance of satisfaction. It is difficult to get rid of principles which have been proved deceptive. No man likes to admit that he has made a mistake. We stand at a point where obstinacy still conquers reason. But in a little while it is to be hoped that reason will prevail ; and that some more fruitful principle will gradually be substituted for its barren predecessor.

For really the matter stands thus. The cry was raised, and was at first accepted : " No religious teaching ought to be provided at the public expense which any section of the community objects to ". This principle has been tried, and has not worked satisfactorily. It is difficult to discover that to which no one objects ;

and when it is gradually discovered it does not correspond to the expectations which were formed about it. This would not be a convincing argument against the present system if no other principle could be substituted. But there is another principle which is more in accordance with our English conception of liberty. It is this: "All religious teaching ought to be provided at the public expense which any section of the community desires". We have tried the experiment of allowing every parent to say what he does not wish his children to be taught: might we not try a system which allows every parent to say what he does wish his children to be taught? Is it not better for the community to give effect to the positive desires of its citizens rather than to gratify their negative objections? Surely true liberty consists in every one having his own way so far as is compatible with the well-being of society as a whole. Where men are not agreed society cannot enforce a general system; if it tries to create a general system by attempting to discover a residuum, after all disagreements have been omitted, it is really doing a wrong to all positive convictions, and is working in the interests of those whose convictions are fewest. While professing to be neutral it is really throwing the weight of its influence into the scale which weighs the least. This fact is being gradually appreciated. When it is more clearly seen its significance will be recognised. By maintaining our voluntary schools at a considerable cost of repeated acts of self-sacrifice, we are affording public opinion time to turn round. We are not engaged in a hopeless struggle against a system which satisfies everybody except ourselves. On the

other hand, we are maintaining a principle which makes for a larger conception of individual liberty than that which at present prevails.

We are, therefore, maintaining voluntary schools not primarily in the interests of the Church, but in those of the Christian religion. We wish to make common cause with all Christians. The issue is too serious to be confounded with any other; and our hopes for the future depend on our power of making clear the absolute integrity of our intentions. Let us make it clear that we ask nothing for ourselves which we do not ask for every other religious body. We desire to see religious instruction given in a religious spirit, and given intelligently. We value a knowledge of the Bible, not only for its religious importance, but for its educational importance. I think that this is apt to be underrated; but to me it seems that the only instruction given in elementary schools which tends to mental cultivation is that which centres round the teaching of the Bible. The Bible contains history, poetry, morality, as well as religion. It stimulates fancy and develops thought, besides the spiritual influence which it exercises. Any knowledge of Scripture is some foundation on which the soul may one day be built up. It would be grievous indeed if the jealousies of rival sects should imperil the vast advantage to be obtained from every child knowing the contents of Holy Writ.

I would, therefore, urge upon you to maintain all existing provisions for religious teaching, and try to make them as ample as can be. I would urge the recognition of all teachers as entrusted with a religious

mission, and entitled to sympathy and esteem. The schoolmaster, whether he be the master of a voluntary school or of Board school, should be regarded by the clergyman as his natural friend and helper. The school, in like manner, should be the object of interest to all who are striving for the welfare of the parish. We cannot think too much of it, nor of the young ones who will soon grow up and form the England of the future.

These are general considerations, and perhaps do not help directly to that "educational policy" which is so often demanded. I do not think that opinion at present is ripe for a universal agreement. But by maintaining our schools we maintain the cause of religious education, which I believe the English people have sincerely at heart. We maintain them in the hope of a time when all schools may be federated, and all children may receive the religious teaching which their parents wish. As Churchmen, we want nothing more than a guarantee that the children of Church people may be taught what their parents wish them to be taught. The same liberty which we ask for ourselves we ask for all others. If this were to be achieved, we should have a system of national education which corresponded to the facts of national life; and all financial difficulties would be at an end. In fact, the Church is not striving against a national system of education, but is striving to discover one which will be national in reality as well as in name, in contents as well as in externals.

I have spoken hitherto of the religious side of elementary education. It is deplorable that "the

education question" should at present mean this, and this only. This aspect is of primary, I may say of vital, importance; and when once raised must remain in the first place till it is settled. But there are many other questions connected with education in which the clergy should be deeply interested. They ought from their position and their opportunities to be the independent observers and critics of the whole system of elementary education, which is still in a rudimentary condition. No one can profess unmixed satisfaction with its results in awakening intelligence and forming character. Teachers, inspectors, and those who are called educationists, all have their own proposals for amendment. But the clergy ought to lead in creating a public interest in the contents of education. It is not enough to build school buildings in accordance with the last requirements of sanitary science, nor to determine how much religion shall be taught in them. There remains the abiding question, by what means, and in what subjects the intelligence of the scholars can best be developed. I incline to think that our present system errs on the side of uniformity. It does not follow that all over England, in towns and country, the subjects should be substantially the same. There is need for greater latitude of experiment. But any relaxation of central control in this respect is only possible if local interest be keen, and if there be an intelligent body to whom some measure of responsibility may be delegated. I could imagine a committee of the Town Council, or the District Council, which stood between the schools and the Department. But the existence of such a body would probably pre-

suppose more general interest in the nature and contents of education than already exists. To quicken such interest is a worthy object, which ought not, even among the pressure of other objects, to be forgotten. Moreover it is becoming increasingly plain that an education, which necessarily ceases at an early age, needs to be supplemented. In the country no one ought to be so zealous as the clergyman in organising and directing Continuation Classes. It ought to be a natural and obvious thing for every child who leaves school to be drafted at once into such a class, and to continue a course of regular study. The utility of such a proceeding should be enforced from time to time on those who are about to leave school; and it ought to be possible to form a fairly accurate idea of the sort of subject which would possess most interest for them. A little care in combining a certain amount of recreation with instruction would undoubtedly make the arrangement easier. Every clergyman has some sort of organisation of his own for the good of the young when they leave school. He would find this organisation much more potent for good if it did not stand alone, but comprised every agency which could help to form character. Industry and application are habits which affect the whole of life. Boys and girls would be more likely to be regular at Sunday School, at Confirmation Classes, at Communicants' Classes, if they also attended Continuation Classes. The intellectual life is closely connected with the spiritual life. Nothing would be more likely to promote the welfare of the young than that they should leave school with a workable scheme for disposing of

their leisure, with intelligible objects set before them for their own welfare. Every child carries away from school at least a sense of discipline. With a little personal care this might be maintained against the temptations of a precocious freedom. It is the few weeks after leaving school which constitute the most severe crisis of a young life. Care at such a time is most fruitful. It is easier to keep the young in hand, than to recover a hold which has been lost. But this can only be done by providing in some degree for all the natural needs of developing character.

In the same way the clergy ought to be assiduous helpers in the experiments which are now being made in the direction of Technical Education. I think it most fortunate that one branch of education has accidentally been left open for local experiments, and I hope that this experimental stage will not be prematurely checked. But this will undoubtedly depend upon the interest which is taken in it. Experiment is of little value unless it is accompanied by careful observation, and the clergy ought to form a class of interested and capable observers. Organisers and teachers alike have much to learn, and would be grateful for unobtrusive hints founded on an appreciation of the difficulties and on a desire to help.

I need not pursue this subject further. It is our boast in England that education in the past has been almost entirely the work of men animated by religious motives. It must always be the work which comes next in importance to directly spiritual work. I have given reasons why I think that the continued interest of the Church in the matter is needful for some time

to come. The school must still hold its place as part of the machinery of the parish. I can only say that it is more valuable than many objects on which money is freely spent: organs, painted windows, decorations of the Church, and the like.

The great argument to be adduced for the maintenance of Church schools is the religious life which they develop. This largely depends upon the zeal of the clergyman and his hearty co-operation with the teachers. Interest in children is surely easy to every one; the bond of sympathy established in childhood ought to grow steadily stronger as life goes on. All efforts for the good of man must begin at the beginning. Take care of Christ's little ones; they will teach you more than you can teach them. The surest sign of social progress is increasing interest in the generation that is to come. "When our sons are like plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters like corner stones, polished after the likeness of a temple" —this is the first step to that sound national prosperity which leads to the glorious recognition, "Blessed are the people that is in such a case: Yea, happy are the people whose God is the Lord".

IV.

BRETHREN OF THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS OF THE DEANERIES OF NORTHAMPTON, DAVENTRY, HADDON, PRESTON, ROTHWELL AND WEEDON.

Biblical Criticism.

I propose to speak to you to-day about the main aspect of some intellectual questions which are agita-

ting men's minds as regards the Bible. It is a large subject, and I cannot hope to do more than deal with its immediate and practical application to ourselves and our teaching.

The Church of Christ stands in manifold relations to the world, so manifold that we are constantly wishing to escape from some of them, to reserve something as entirely our own, entirely free from the changes and chances of this mortal life. God is always declaring to us that this may not be; and we learn His lessons with pain and with a rebellious sense of disappointment. Man is always wishing for something absolutely fixed. He is constantly erecting barriers beyond which change may not pass: he is constantly seeing those barriers swept away. It was the work of the Middle Ages, amid the stress of war and the pressure of political insecurity, to build up an inalterable system in the organisation of the Christian Church. Oblivious of actual fact, the Western Church claimed to be a universal and necessary system, so constructed that its unity was beyond challenge. The revolt of the sixteenth century against the arbitrary limitations which this system imposed upon the spiritual life shattered for ever its claim to universal allegiance. The Bible was then by many of those who departed from the system of the Church clothed with the same claims to infallibility which they denied to any organisation. The result has been that the Bible, in its turn, has been subjected to the same process of investigation as that which was undergone by the system of the Church. This process has been continuous; but its results have been more rapid in

recent years, and have been communicated in a more out-spoken manner.

Now the Church of England stands in a unique position as regards the whole of this phase of religious development. It did not, like other bodies, cast aside the ancient system of the Church. It was not tempted into the paths of revolution, but followed the safer course of reformation. It did not break the continuity of the historic Church, but with sound learning and spiritual insight proceeded gradually to disentangle what was primitive and Catholic from later accretions, which might be useful or otherwise in themselves, but were to be judged in the first instance with reference, not to their temporary usefulness, but to the standard of Scripture as interpreted by primitive practice. The Church of England, in fact, strove to distinguish between the authority which God for His purposes had conferred on His Church, and that authority which man for his purposes had claimed in God's name. This process was the result of criticism, of careful investigation, accurate inquiry, and impartial weighing of evidence. It did not please enthusiasts on either side; but it was a humble and sincere attempt to learn the lesson which God had taught His Church, and to submit human inventions, however venerable, to the test which God prescribed.

Hence it is that the Church of England stands in a remarkably free attitude towards the progress of human learning. It has nothing to conceal, and shrinks from no inquiry. No religious organisation attaches a higher importance to Holy Scripture, or venerates more highly its authority; but it has never

committed itself to any theory concerning the mode in which Scripture was written, or the weight to be attached to it for any other purpose than that of ascertaining all that is necessary to salvation. That the Scriptures contain God's revelation to man there must be no doubt; but the Church of England has never erected any artificial barrier against inquiry into the mode in which that revelation was made, into the method and degree in which God's Spirit made use of human instruments, into the way in which national records were penetrated with the sense of a Divine purpose. It is true that assumptions have been made on these points, and also on others. Men have always asked questions, and have given themselves answers to the best of their capacity. Such answers are of the nature of hypotheses, founded on the best knowledge available, but capable of extension or alteration as knowledge advances. Thus in former times men inferred the answer to questions concerning the origin of the outward world and the beginnings of life from the words of Scripture. When these questions were investigated in reference to observed facts, the results of inquiry did not correspond with the prevailing hypothesis. The inquirers did not always content themselves with putting aside these hypotheses, but unwarrantably attacked the spiritual truths from which these hypotheses had been wrongly inferred. While, on the other side, those who maintained the spiritual truths showed undue reluctance to abandon hypotheses which rested on speculative inference and not on the evidence of observation and experiment.

In some sense, this is the case with Biblical Criticism. The ordinary mind has accepted certain views about the authorship and method of inspiration of the Bible, which were current hypotheses, till the question was subjected to careful investigation. I am far from saying that these hypotheses are untenable; but every one ought to be quite sure about the difference between what is actually said in Scripture on those points, and what is merely the view which he himself has been led to adopt. It is obvious that the position of Scripture is not affected by anything which only investigates the current opinion about it, and carefully weighs the statements which it contains.

Still, it is natural that many pious Christian minds should be disquieted by the abundance of recent speculation on the authorship and mode of composition of many of the books contained in the Bible. It must seem to them that such treatment introduces uncertainty into God's Word as a whole. It is indeed sad, but inevitable, that every intellectual process should be at first tentative. In our own day results are made known as they occur to the explorer's mind, and are put forward in a form which can never be considered final. There is a tendency to assign great weight to particular theories, simply because they are put forward. There is an uneasiness at knowing that on such points there can be any difference of opinion. There is an uncomfortable feeling of distrust in some minds.

My brethren, his faith must always be weak which rests upon details, and not upon the apprehension of a spiritual principle of life. The central object of the

Christian faith is the Person of the Lord Jesus, in whom was made the supreme revelation of God's purpose to the world. No man's faith is secure unless it rests on Him, and has become vital by spiritual experience. Let us remember that the meaning of Christianity is this: God manifested in Christ Jesus, who is to us the Way, the Truth and the Life.

This is obvious enough in itself. But the appreciation of it greatly affects our attitude towards intellectual questions when they are raised. The Christian's belief is in a Person, who is ever present with him, in whose presence his life is lived, and by whose aid his soul's activities are developed. The Bible is to him the Divinely ordered record of that Person. In other words, we read our Bible that it may show us Christ, and that by prayerful study and meditation Christ may grow in our hearts by faith.

The Book which is thus intimately associated with our life and thought has an inherent sacredness. The Christian cannot regard it as like any other book. He shrinks from subjecting it to ordinary tests, or treating it in a cold and external manner. Yet this is precisely what he has had to endure, and what he cannot hope to escape.

If we ask how this situation comes about, we must answer that the mind of man is perpetually curious, and through its growing curiosity God trains us to a constant increase of knowledge. God created man after His own image, and gave him his faculties of body and mind that he should replenish the earth and subdue it. Every increase of knowledge gives

man greater power over his surroundings. It is made, we cannot doubt it, in accordance with the will of God, and may be used for good or for evil. It is used for good if it reinforces the spiritual and moral perceptions of man; it is used for evil if it leads to arrogance and short-sighted denial of God and His relation to man. That relation is summed up in the manifestation of the Lord Jesus; and the Scriptures show us that manifestation and the steps which prepare the way for it. The contents of God's revelation made in the Bible are briefly—the preparation for Christ, the coming of Christ, and the beginnings of Christ's Church; or in other words, the history of Israel, the life of Christ, the doings and writings of His Apostles.

Now these are concerned with facts, facts which have a spiritual significance to the believer, but which also stand in relation to other facts of recorded history. Criticism is the attempt to determine that relation; and in so doing it examines the records in which these facts are contained. The value of such an examination must always depend on the impartiality with which it is undertaken. Much of the criticism of the New Testament has been animated by the desire to explain away the miraculous element which it contains, by depriving the Gospels of the authority of contemporary records and representing them as the work of a later age with legendary accretions. Now if an ingenious writer begins with that intention, it is comparatively easy to put together a case. But the case only seems strong till it is answered. It is only after a lengthened controversy, when every available

scrap of evidence has been carefully collected, interpreted in every possible way, weighed and judged from every side, that it is possible to determine the limits within which two opinions are tenable. It is enough to say that as regards the Gospels the controversy has driven their assailants nearer and nearer to the date of the authors to whom they are ascribed by tradition.

In recent years, however, criticism has been more busied with the Old Testament than with the New. It is obvious that the questions which may be raised concerning the Old Testament cover a much larger area than those which can be raised concerning the brief period which is covered by the New Testament. The Old Testament in fact contains the whole history and literature of a people. Those records and that literature possess a remarkable unity. They show a consciousness of a Divine purpose running through human affairs and inspiring human thought. It is this consciousness of a purpose, becoming more and more definite in its expectation of a spiritual redemption, which gives them their eternal value to the Christian. But we must admit that, besides their religious significance, they possess also a vast historical importance, and have a unique literary value. They form a central point of interest for students of ancient history, of early institutions, and of the development of human thought. These are all studies which have an existence independent of religion. We cannot feel surprised that students of these subjects should apply to the records contained in the Old Testament the same method of critical examination which they

believe to have been fruitful of results as regards the records of the history of other nations.

But here I would say at once that all criticism is after all only conjectural. It depends partly upon a careful comparison of the written history with other similar records, with inscriptions and the like. But it depends also largely on the assumption of a certain creative sympathy with past conditions, which enables the critic to weave together scattered hints into a connected system. His results can never be absolutely certain. They depend upon a point of view which is only probable, and which can only prove its probability by the ingenuity with which it weaves together established facts and slight indications. It can never rise beyond the level of a plausible hypothesis, liable to be upset by some new discovery, or by a more plausible hypothesis.

Now the criticism of Hebrew documents is rendered difficult by the absence of any data for comparison. We know the development of the English language, and we could recognise the arguments by which a particular document could be shown to belong to a particular date. But in the Hebrew writings any theory of literary development must depend on reasoning which is rarely beyond dispute. There may be a temporary agreement amongst scholars, but it rests upon too frail a foundation to become absolutely permanent. There is a charm about a luminous suggestion; but its luminousness often disappears. The human mind is hard to satisfy. One generation builds up and another pulls down. There can be no finality where there is no positive evidence available.

No theory about the composition of the books of the Old Testament can at present be accepted as established. On some points I do not see how any theory can hope to win its way to undoubted acceptance. For instance, no evidence is available which will enable us to form a decision about the authorship of the Psalms, which shall supersede authoritatively the traditional attribution.

Moreover, the important point about the history of Israel is its exhibition of the national consciousness. The Jewish historians set forth a Divine purpose running through human affairs. It is this interpretation of God's purpose in events, not the events themselves, which gives this record of a nation's life its religious significance. This remains untouched, whatever theory be adopted about the authorship and mode of composition of the records. This is admitted on all hands. The critics of the Old Testament do not attempt to deprive it of its religious importance as a Divine revelation. They are merely engaged in investigating the mode in which that revelation was made. Those who have not been accustomed to such investigations shrink from them with a feeling of alarm at the audacity of the attempt. They have received the Bible as the Word of God. They may take courage by thinking that it will ever remain so. Analysis may, or may not, succeed in establishing its results about the mode in which the Old Testament came into its present shape. But it cannot, and does not undertake to account for the spiritual conceptions which it reveals. The Spirit of God spake to the spirit of man, "by divers portions

and in divers manners". If God chooses that men should meditate on these manners, and endeavour to separate these portions, it is only the attempt to express in organised form what was implicitly felt by a writer in apostolic times.

For my own part I feel that God calls man to exercise his mental powers, and wills that we should "prove all things and hold fast to that which is good". I would not venture to check inquiry, conducted in a reverent spirit, by rash assertion of its futility, or by appeals to ulterior considerations. I think that it is dangerous to maintain that we are bound to uphold the conception of the authorship of the Old Testament prevalent amongst the Jews at the time of our Lord, because on some occasions He spoke of it in the only way which was intelligible to those whom He addressed. This is a very large subject, requiring careful treatment, and opening up theological questions which have never yet received the judgment of the Church. The mystery of the Incarnation is an eternal verity whose significance we must keep intact. The records of past controversies show us the dangers which ensued from attempting to discern too rashly between the "very God and very man" in the Person of the Lord. He bore witness of the Scriptures that they testified of Him, that they constituted a Divine revelation. Their words were in His heart and in His mouth. His example forbids us from undervaluing their sacredness.

But I own I shrink from interpreting His language with reference to a question which is not religious, but scientific. If the criticism of the Old Testament was

directed to prove that it was not the Word of God, that it contained no Divine message for mankind, then the authority of Jesus would be final against such an attempt. But the criticism which we have in view aims merely at deciding—in accordance with certain principles, whose value has yet to be exactly determined —by what means and at what time the Old Testament came into its present form. Such an inquiry has only recently become possible. It seems to me dangerous to construct logical dilemmas, and involve the great doctrine of the Incarnation in passing controversy.

There are some minds which are impatient of anything that resembles suspended judgment: indeed suspended judgment is impossible as regards vital principles. We must believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and Jesus to be the Word made flesh. But the relation of God's revelation in Scripture to God's perpetual revelation, which is being made in history and in life, is a matter which may be considered. Scripture has been interpreted in the past in various ways, and has been applied to the settlement of current questions according to prevailing modes of thought. Some of these modes of interpretation we now reject as unsound or partial. As a matter of fact no one part of man's knowledge can exist by itself. One truth is insensibly held in relation to other truths, and derives its vital power from the questions to which it is applied. These questions are raised for us. We are none of us individually responsible for them. They are there and must be answered. They are the heritage of our own age and of the special conditions among which our life is cast.

Are we to say that this is accidental, or that it is God's purpose for us? A Christian cannot doubt about the answer to this question. He must assume the responsibility which devolves upon him, and submit to the discipline by which alone it can be discharged.

It is the temper of the present day to ask the question *How?* about all things. We can welcome such curiosity; but the point where we must be cautious is that the answer given to the question *How?* should not be confused with the answer to that other question *Why?* No investigation *how* the Scriptures are the will of God can answer the question *why* they are the will of God. That can be seen only by the spiritual consciousness, and the continuous record of that spiritual consciousness constitutes the authority of the Church.

That authority cannot be impaired unless the Church, on its side, undertakes to answer the question *How?* Such an attempt has not been made by the Church of England. It has no utterances to explain away, no positions which it is bound to maintain at all hazards. Its great process of reformation was carried out by the recognition of a growth of knowledge. It did not commit the fatal error of erecting a system, strong in an appearance of unchangeable organisation, possessed with an answer to every question, and claiming infallible authority. It laid down decidedly enough the truths of the Catholic faith, it retained every vestige of primitive practice and of primitive organisation; but it left ample room for liberty, and did not pretend to remove from the individual his due share of responsibility. The wisdom of that decision

has been abundantly proved by its results. Anglican theology has been distinguished by its sound learning and its penetrating insight. No branch of the Church has made such weighty contributions to theological knowledge since the sixteenth century as has the Church of England. The temper of that Church is admirably adapted to foster theological development on sound lines. I think that Biblical Criticism in England is being conducted in a reverential spirit; and though a certain amount of speculation must necessarily be rash, I think that the sense of responsibility is on the whole maintained. It is a subject of sincere thankfulness that controversy is conducted in the spirit of charity.

The Duty of the Clergy.

It is, I think, the duty of the clergy to attempt to estimate for themselves the general principles on which such criticism is conducted. If people are shocked and uneasy, it is because they are aware that a controversy is going on and do not know its exact bearings. The best answer to such uneasiness is an explanation of the points at issue. Really every reader of the Bible, however simple he may be, is an unconscious critic. He has favourite passages which seem to him to contain a special message for himself, special books which seem to him more luminous than others. Criticism is an attempt to explain on general principles how this comes to be the case. God's revelation was undoubtedly given in reference to current events of a distant past. Christ was manifested in a particular period of the world's history,

and some of His teaching had reference to the facts before Him. The writings of the Apostles were called forth by the needs of the time in which they wrote. We have to gain our knowledge of God's will by its spirit, not by the letter. All Christian teaching involves a certain amount of interpretation, of transference, of application, which rests upon a basis of criticism. There is a sense in which criticism always has been, and always must be, a function of the Christian teacher; for he "is like a householder, who brings out of his treasures things new and old". He has to attach the Gospel message to the definite and existing needs of men. He has to show how it can answer their actual questions; he has to reveal the spiritual principles which underlie their particular problems; he has to trace God's eternal purpose working itself out progressively in the apparently accidental circumstances of human affairs. "The Church of God," it has been finely said, "is mankind knowing and fulfilling its destiny."

Now, as a matter of practical conclusion, I think that it is well for the clergy to acquaint themselves with the methods pursued by Biblical critics, and to appreciate once for all the limitations inherent in the method itself. The true student knows how tentative and uncertain are his seeming conclusions; he does not always succeed in stating them with becoming modesty. He is habituated to the power of isolating a particular point; he is solving a puzzle by trying all possible solutions, and he publishes every ingenious attempt at a solution which occurs to him. Such attempted solutions are meant for experts who are

engaged in a similar process. The danger is that from time to time some of the rashest of these suggestions are suddenly popularised, and treated as though they were proved beyond doubt. The only answer to questions is to have some knowledge of the general method employed, so as to put the particular matter in its proper place and reduce it to due proportions.

But I do not think that these discussions are fitted for the pulpit, and I would dissuade my clergy from controversial sermons. The ordinary services of the Church are not the place for apologetics. Men come to Church that they may be built up in the faith, that they may have God and His law, Christ and His redemption, brought nearer to their souls by the Holy Spirit. Strength comes to them through the simple and straightforward utterances of a soul which is at peace with God, through the manifestation of a personality which they have seen active during the week, "coming in and going out among them," living in sympathy with the lives of others, striving to remove temptations, to console and uplift. They do not wish for discussions, however clever, of the questions of the day. These are ever with them—in the newspapers, in business, in talk. These are best treated in free discussion; for they present themselves differently to every man, and do not admit of general answers. But all men long for a firmer hold on great principles, for the assurance of spiritual power, for warnings against temptation, for some spur to greater effort, for a higher and nobler view of life, its duties and its possibilities. If you give them this, they will thank you.

There is a tendency at the present day to undervalue preaching, and to substitute for it better music in Church, and greater zeal for practical work outside it. These are very well in their way: but they are not substitutes for preaching. Let sermons be shorter by all means. Everything nowadays is shorter. The length of letters written twenty years ago fills us with amazement. We have learned to say what we have to say more directly and in fewer words. But brevity needs more careful preparation, and men wish for something pointed which comes home to them. There is much to be said if you would take pains in saying it. What life is teaching yourself is of value to others. Try to discover what that is and speak it out simply.

For assuredly "the Word of the Lord endureth for ever". His message comes from on high, and His Spirit only can carry it to men's hearts. It is yours to proclaim with human voice that message, and show its unending fitness to the needs of every soul.

V.

Brethren of the Clergy and Churchwardens of the Deaneries of Rothwell, Higham Ferrers, Weldon, Towcester, Brackley and Preston,

The Church in which we are met to-day reminds us of our gains and of our losses. Since last you met within its walls it has been restored with exceptional thoroughness, and now stands in all its original dignity and completeness. But Canon Lindsay, who gave his energy to this work, and by his watchful care over the best interests of the place erected this Church into a

monument which was intelligible to all who dwelt within its reach, was taken away before he could see the work finally accomplished. Surely this is a parable of much earnest work for God: it is done in singleness of heart: it is done for no personal motive: it is done ungrudgingly for the good of future generations. "If I can make life easier and better for those who are to come after me," such is the thought of many a faithful heart, "what matters my individual success?" The personal life is ever incomplete in its self-manifestation on earth. It is only lived in truth if it is freely given to God, that it may be woven into the Divine purpose which runs through the world's activities.

Changing Conditions of Rural England.

The change which is passing over the conditions of English life greatly affects the appearance of our rural parishes, and causes some anxiety about their future. They have been affected by economic changes of two kinds. One of these causes of change, the falling prices for agricultural products, is sufficiently recognised; but the other cause, though less spoken of, is equally serious—I mean the gradual extinction of all home industries. Never till our own day was the distinction between town and country a distinction resting entirely on the difference between industrial and agricultural employment: never before was the country inhabited almost exclusively by those engaged in tilling the soil. The development of machinery has led to the factory system becoming almost universal. There are very few occupations, except those con-

cerned with agriculture, which can now be carried on save in considerable centres of population. Industrial towns are everywhere growing: old country towns are losing their importance because their market is almost entirely for produce, and not for the results of local industry. Some villages favourably situated for industrial development are springing into towns; those not so situated show a declining population, and it is difficult to determine how much further that decline will go.

The prospect for the future which this state of things opens up affords wide room for speculation, in which it is not for me to indulge. I only wish to put before you the actual fact that England, broadly speaking, is rapidly being resolved into a number of larger and smaller industrial communities, for which the country districts are partly purveyors, and partly supply a stream of immigrants. The country is ceasing to have definite characteristics of its own, and more and more is becoming dependent on the towns. Consequently the nature of the duty and the aims of the country clergyman is changing also. He must expect to see many of his young men and women leave their homes and seek a career elsewhere: his diminishing population tends to consist more and more of the old and the young.

This fact points out that the great sphere of his activity must be his school. The country clergyman has an opportunity, which his brother in the town regretfully longs for, of knowing all his children individually, and of becoming their personal friend. I have met clergymen working in country parishes who

lament that they have not more to do: on the other hand, I have met clergymen, who have quitted large town parishes for work in the country, who tell me that they have more to do in the country than they ever had to do in the town. Really the nature of a clergyman's work is boundless in its opportunities; and any watchful mind can find abundant scope for all its energies in carefully striving to promote the highest interests of any number, however small, of his fellows. Intimate knowledge develops sympathy and inspires mutual confidence. Each year the bond grows stronger, trustfulness increases, and deeper lessons are learned on both sides. No man can teach unless he also learns, and few opportunities are afforded of learning the great lessons of life which are comparable to those offered to the country clergyman. He has a great possibility of influencing for good the character of every one in his parish, if only he will be patient and will persevere. He ought to know each child in his school, which he ought to visit, if not daily, yet at regular intervals in every week. He ought to be the friend and adviser of every one in his parish without distinction of any kind. He ought to be ready and willing to be helpful for every purpose. I will only give one instance: he ought to take pleasure in furthering education such as is now offered by various schemes of the County Councils. He might himself attend such lectures, and might be useful in giving hints to lecturers about the best methods of interesting an audience, whose peculiarities he has studied. It must be remembered that the art of lecturing to village audiences is yet in its infancy,

and can only be developed by actual experiments. In guiding such experiments the help of the clergy may be invaluable. I certainly think that every clergyman ought to consider it one of his chief duties to forward in every way all attempts which are being made to widen popular interests and to create an intelligent interest in practical pursuits.

The Local Government Bill.

We all welcome the course of recent legislation which had for its object the extension of local self-government, which is the most primitive principle of English institutions. The simplification of its forms, and their adaptation to the growth of our parliamentary system, is a task which has just been accomplished. I hope and trust that the new organisation, which is soon to come into operation, will be successful in quickening interest in public affairs. It seems to me that the duties and obligations of citizenship cannot be satisfactorily discharged as regards national questions till the principles on which they rest have been learned in matters which are within the ken of the individual. Government ought not to be to any citizen something remote and inevitable. It should appear to him as the natural expansion of something which is already familiar to him on a small scale. He ought to recognise close at hand the motives, the principles, the methods and the aims of those who claim to manage his affairs. He ought to learn by experience how mistakes are made in public business; he ought to appreciate the complexity of existing conditions, the emptiness of mere formulæ, and the value of integrity of purpose in

administrative matters. Nothing has such a tendency to narrow a man's power of thought as a blind belief in the actions of government as being something inevitable, which are carried on automatically, and are outside any control with which he is familiar. We wish to moralise the action of the community. The first step towards this is to humanise it; and this can only be done by teaching every man to recognise his own responsibility in his own degree for the formation of that public opinion which is so irresistible. Nothing is so likely to teach fair-mindedness as open discussion. Nothing is so sure to engender suspicion as a sense of personal helplessness and irresponsibility for what actually occurs. It is most necessary for political training that every community, however small, should have the possibility of common action within its power. There may, or may not be, much which it can do; but the whole community should know the reasons for which what is done is done, and should recognise the justice of the limitations on its activity. The parish meeting will bring home to the mass of Englishmen the sense of responsibility, a sense which we wish to see fully developed and recognised.

Parochial Charities.

I do not mean to imply that this sense has not hitherto existed. It is, in fact, noticeable that the vestry meeting is a survival from times when local government was vigorous. The concerns of the parish Church were never removed from the control of the parishioners. Governmental centralisation never attempted to interfere with the local interest in the parish

Church, which always was entrusted to the safe keeping of those for whom it was provided. Other local officials might be abolished, but Churchwardens remained. As they were the sole representatives of the parish, they had committed to them from time to time duties and trusts which were intended for the general welfare. Thus the office of overseers was conferred upon them by statute when the Poor Law first grew up round the organisation of the Church; and the management of charitable funds, which were intended to supplement the statutory provision, was naturally entrusted to them in many cases. Now, when the State undertook to reorganise and simplify local government, it was obvious that it should withdraw from these ancient officers all the powers which it had conferred on them, and everything which could fairly be considered as having accrued round their position as representatives of the parish. This was perfectly fair. But it was also obvious that, while the Churchwardens were officers of the parish, they were also officers of the Church: and while they were trustees of some bequests made to the parish, they were also trustees of other bequests which were made to the Church. It was necessary that an attempt should be made to discriminate between these two positions; and some consideration was requisite to prevent confusion. It is always well to have such points clearly determined beforehand, and a little care taken in time prevents misunderstanding afterwards. The desire to make the Act as intelligible as possible, and to free it from opportunities of contention, was surely laudable, and cannot fairly be represented as implying any opposition to the general principle on

which it was framed. Of this I am certain that, so far as the Church can be said to have had any views of its own on this matter, its only desire was to have a clear and fair definition which would prevent disputes. I hope that the care which was bestowed on this point may prove to have been successful. I trust that there may be no difference of opinion in determining the division between parochial and ecclesiastical possessions in any of the parishes of this Diocese. Of course, trust deeds must be respected, and the duties of official trustees must be discharged. But I think we are all agreed that Parochial Charities had best be administered by a body elected with a view to that purpose.

I know that the clergy as a body are strongly of that opinion; because they know from sad experience how difficult it is to distribute alms, however small, in a satisfactory manner. I do not mean only the patent and notorious fact that the existence of a charity leads to exaggerated expectations, and that murmuring and disappointment follows upon any mode of disposing of it. In the earliest period of the Church, as soon as Christian charity came into existence, there was such a murmuring among the Christians of Jerusalem, that one body of the widows were neglected in the daily ministration. The Apostles discovered how great were the difficulties of satisfying everybody, and their action pointed out a general principle which has been somewhat forgotten. The moral which I draw from the appointment of the first deacons is that a clergyman is as a rule exceptionally ill adapted to act as an almoner. The fact that he undertakes to discharge

such a function, disturbs those frank relations which ought to exist between him and his people. I am not speaking of course of that spontaneous benevolence which flows from the sight of human misery, and stirs the beholder to do what he can to remedy it. This is inherent in human nature, and must be strong in every Christian heart. But I mean the official obligation to dispose of a certain sum, whether he thinks it needed or not, in a mode which he may not consider wise. There is nothing which requires more careful consideration, founded upon results of experience and a knowledge of social conditions, than the disposal of charitable funds in a really useful way. Their distribution by popularly-elected representatives will at all events lead to a keen criticism of the methods adopted, and will probably produce a wealth of suggestion on the part of those concerned.

We must recognise that charitable funds exist for the purpose of supplementing other agencies which are at work for the amelioration of social conditions. There was a time when these agencies were few, and were external to those who were affected by them. These agencies are now numerous, and many of them are within people's power to use. There are many benefit societies, and other means of making provision against sickness or misfortune. It is well that any distribution of charitable funds should be made in view of all the possibilities which were open ; that it should be made with a certain amount of publicity, and should be so made as to strengthen, and not to weaken, every existing machinery and every existing motive to self-help. The great object should be to

alleviate suffering without injuring the mainsprings of effort, to succour the poor without promoting pauperism. This can best be done by an elected body representing the experience and the sense of the community. I think that it is dangerous to trust entirely to compassion, which may be skilfully aroused by an unworthy person, and is gratified on the impulse of the moment. I think that we need to be weighted by responsibility in almsgiving; and that our personal feeling of compassion ought to be satisfied at our own expense, and not out of funds of which we are trustees. The educational advantage to be gained by experiments in the distribution of charity on public grounds is very large. The more the interest of the community is enlisted in the matter the better. There is no more valuable lesson to learn than the difficulty of doing good to others by means of money. It enforces the great truth that "a man's life develops from within". It brings home the fact that character is largely independent of conditions. It teaches men to distrust panaceas and seek for principles of social life. This is the spirit which we wish to see in all our villages. We wish to see the whole community united in the sense of a common life, eager to discover how that life can best be lived, finding a voice to express its needs, and learning by experience how they can best be supplied.

The Duty of the Clergy.

And in this movement and endeavour the people have a right, which my brethren will fully recognise, to look to the clergyman as their natural leader and adviser. He will always be ready to talk over matters,

to explain possibilities, to devise means for gratifying every laudable desire, to compose little differences, to make for godly union and concord. If proposals be sometimes crude, he will seek out their real meaning and put it into form. He will strip them of their accidental and temporary surroundings, will sympathise with the thing aimed at, and will suggest some means for an experiment, the result of which all may loyally accept. The strength of a clergyman's position lies in the fact that he belongs to no class and to no party. It is his duty to consider only the general welfare, and seek out the principles on which it rests. If questions are unfortunately entangled in the complications of politics or of local jealousies and misunderstandings, he must be prepared patiently to unravel the real issues, and quietly to put aside what is irrelevant. We all know that misunderstandings generally arise from temper, and that in small communities it is hard to undo the results of a quarrel. Need I remind my brethren of their Ordination Vow, "to maintain and set forwards, as much as lieth in you, peace and love amongst all Christian people, and especially among them who are committed to your charge?" There is no reason why the pursuit of the common welfare should be an occasion of discord. There may naturally be differences of opinion, but these can be composed by discussion, and the clergyman can do much to make that discussion assume a friendly form.

Much of the success of a new system depends on the way in which it is begun. I think it would be well to prepare beforehand for an administrative change of such importance. Acts of Parliament are

not adapted for ordinary readers, and this particular Act contains a mass of complicated detail. I notice that its provisions have been explained in several Ruri-decanal Conferences, and some people have tried to make themselves masters of them. It would be a very useful step if the Act were explained to the people of every village, before it actually comes into operation. I do not say that the clergyman is in every case qualified for this task, but there are many laymen who would be glad to devote an evening to this purpose if asked; and I recommend that where it is possible, their services should be used for that purpose. The audience should be encouraged to ask for explanations, and should be provided with material which they might talk over among themselves. I feel sure that such help would be greatly appreciated and would be of much value.

I have been asked by several of the clergy if I advise them to stand for election on the Parish or District Councils. I can only answer that this depends on two things: first, on their capacity for business. A clergyman may or may not be a man of business, and the object of the Council is to transact business. I do not think that an interest in the welfare of the parish is a sufficient qualification in itself, unless it is supported by some business capacity. A man must expect to be chosen with reference to the work which is to be done. But I think that every clergyman ought to be willing to render every service which he can to the community; and if there is a widely expressed desire that he should serve, I think that he ought to do so, even if his personal inclination

is to abstain. If he declines, it ought to be on the ground that he is keenly aware of his incapacity, and thinks that there are others with greater qualifications than his own.

There is also another consideration which affects this question. It may be that an election is conducted on purely political lines. I need not say that a clergyman ought not to identify himself with either political party, and seem to be their nominee. As a citizen he has a right to his own opinions; but in his official capacity he is bound to be impartial. He can only submit himself to election on general grounds; and if party politics run so high that there is no room even for one independent candidate, then he will refuse to offer himself for the present. I would, however, point out that the Act enables the elected Council to appoint a chairman, "either from their own body or from other persons qualified to be councillors of the parish". If the circumstances of the election are such that the clergyman cannot well become a candidate, it is still in the power of the Council, when the wave of excitement is over, to recognise his wisdom and seek the assistance of one who has declared his impartiality. But I would point out that, whether the clergyman serves on the Parish Council or not, is a matter of small moment, and does not affect his responsibility to help in carrying out anything that is for the welfare of his people. In some cases he may feel that his influence for good is likely to be greater if he does not meddle with the actual details of administration. This must be left to his own judgment, with just the warning that the aloofness of a superior person is

more apt to be misunderstood than anything else, and is on that account likely to be ineffective.

Ecclesiastical Buildings.

There is a point of practical importance which I hope that this new departure in local government will bring into prominence. It is the obscure and uncertain tenure of many parochial buildings and schools. I have already tried to call attention to this matter, and to provide a simple means of remedying deficiencies. The establishment of Diocesan Trustees was a matter of some difficulty; but I would remind you that the Diocese now possesses an organisation which can advise about trust deeds. I hope that this organisation will be used, and that anomalies will soon be rectified. A little care in time may prevent many difficulties in the future.

The Vestry.

The old vestry with its meeting of parishioners still remains for the election of Churchwardens, and for the maintenance of the fabric of the Church. I regret that its constitution is not the same as that of the parish meeting, that it is a meeting of ratepayers, and not of those possessing parliamentary franchise, *i.e.*, householders. I do not know how far select vestries prevail in this Diocese. But I must own my own preference to see the vestry meeting put on the same basis as the parish meeting, and so enlist the sympathies of all in what concerns the Church. I feel quite sure that only those would attend who were interested in the business which was to be done, and that the election of the parish Churchwardens might well be left

to the good sense of all the parishioners who were interested in it. I know what excellent service is rendered by Churchwardens, and I am glad to think that my personal acquaintance with them is constantly increasing. It is gratifying to see many who have discharged the duties of that office for a long term of years, and are always ready to give their time to any necessary work, and to manage the secular business connected with the Church and its maintenance. Their honourable office still remains unchanged, and appeals to the discretion and goodwill of faithful Churchmen.

Duty of the Clergy to Common Life.

I have spoken hitherto chiefly about the prospects of country parishes; but the principles which I have endeavoured to embody in my remarks are of wider application. I have been setting before you one aspect of the Church's activity, an activity which has its field everywhere, that of promoting a vigorous and healthy common life. For the Church of Christ is a spiritual society planted amidst that natural society which has grown up in response to man's requirements, and aims at a just and orderly arrangement of human relationships. The wisdom by which this is achieved is the gift of God: the impulses which direct our common endeavour come also from God, and are largely due to the testimony which is borne by the Church of Christ. God's minister must not only declare that he is possessed of God's truth, but must strive to apply that truth to the manifold needs of men. The Gospel is a message of life, and life means consciousness of power. Anything that quickens and

invigorates is sure in the long run to make for good. Nothing is so hopeless as the torpor of indifference. Any interest, however trivial, is better than no interest at all. "First that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual," is a principle of wide application. You are striving to lead those committed to your charge into the high regions of spiritual freedom, into the conscious exercise of those faculties of the soul wherewith God has endowed every man. It is a hard task, and you are frequently disappointed at the slowness of your progress. Think how God in His mercy dealt with you. Think of the influences which led you to the knowledge of His grace. You are the ministers of Him whose Spirit pleads with man: you can only work by pleading with like persistence and humility. Regard all that happens as so many opportunities which God opens out for you. Look on the actual life and needs of men as divinely ordered starting-points for your endeavours. The Gospel has its message for every man; how are you to bring it to him? Not by starting from any system —which is the goal to which you hope to lead him in the end—but from his life, his needs and his capacities. Improve the best that is in him. You will find that this is what God has done for you. Go with him in any effort to raise himself, to keep himself from temptation, to develop his powers. Let him feel that you are there, sympathising with all that is good in his endeavours, watching for the time when you may speak the words of that great reconciliation which alone can give him peace. Christian love must be carried in faithful hearts to the market-place, to the

recreation ground, to the home. If it is really within you it is always operative, always exercising its attractive power, softening, restraining, purifying. No part of your activity is needless; no good object is without its reward. Unexpected results flow from apparently trivial causes. May I give one instance of my meaning? It has been found that teaching factory girls gymnastics, and training them in musical drill, has not only supplied them with healthy recreation, but has been found most valuable in giving them a decided gait and carriage, and so doing away with that listless and loitering appearance which exposed them to the temptations of the streets.

Nothing is unimportant in God's eyes. Nothing that makes for good should be unimportant in the eyes of God's minister. He works through small things to great. If he does so, he has his reward; for he sees a perpetual revelation of God, and new possibilities are continually opening before him of publishing the mystery—or open secret—"which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we proclaim, admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ".

VI.

My Brethren of the Clergy and Churchwardens of the Deaneries of Rutland.

The Worship of God.

The main purpose for which the Church of Christ exists is the worship of God. On this foundation every form of its external activity must rest. We

may discuss the relation of Christian principles to various points of social organisation. We may consider the intellectual questions which they raise. We may measure their influence, and may meditate how that influence is to be applied and intensified. But these after all are outlying matters. The clergy may develop many forms of activity, but the supreme duty which devolves upon them is to set forth the worship of God. It is only with characters and tempers formed under the purifying and sanctifying influence of worship that they will affect society, and carry into the world the sense of God's presence. Whatever a clergyman may find to do must begin and end in the House of God and its offices. Thence flows the Spirit which animates his work: thither he returns to offer all that he has attempted to Him who is the only source of all his strength.

It cannot be too clearly understood in this day, when manifold suggestions are rife, that it is the great duty of the Church to uphold the worship of God, and to teach men to draw nigh to Him through Jesus Christ. The Church is the witness to God's presence in the world, and sets forth the means whereby He has appointed that mankind should approach Him. Before men can see God in the world, in society, in human life and character, they must see Him in Himself.

The great duty of a minister of God is to set forth God, as the object of men's devotion. What can we do to discharge that duty more fully? For it must be admitted that it is exceedingly necessary in this our day to maintain the basis of religion in its due

place. There is a tendency in an age of rapid progress to dwell on the latest development of thought or feeling, to be anxious about special problems, to be busy with particular forms of the adaptation of truth. This is well enough; but true progress must ever carry with it all that it has gained. In the complication of its ornamentation of the upper storeys, it must not forget the care of the foundations on which all the fabric stands. The quickening of human sympathies ought to go on side by side with deepening awe and reverence for God. We cannot afford to dwell on the love of God till we have steadied our minds by the fear of God. The perception of man's true place in the world, the very basis for an estimate of the force at his disposal, the grounds of our judgments or of our hopes—all these flow from the worship of God, and have their source in the services of His House. The service of man without the service of God becomes an intolerable burden. Hopefulness in the long run is only possible for one who prays. The saying of the Psalmist of old is profoundly true, and reproduces itself in the consciousness of every thoughtful man who looks around upon the world: "These things were too hard for me until I went into the house of the Lord: then I understood". Again I say, there can be no fruitful work which is not founded on the sense of being somehow God's fellow-worker; and this sense is created and sustained by the power of worship, by the insight which we gain into apparent contradictions as we submit ourselves to God's Holy Spirit, by the extended outlook which we win from the uplifting of our soul.

Open Churches and Daily Services.

So would I speak to you of what we can do to extend the spirit of worship: to make it real and penetrating, a perpetual influence and a transforming power. Let me dwell on a few points of practical importance which are within your power. First of all, we possess a magnificent heritage, a deposit of the spiritual aspirations of past generations, in the beautiful Churches, with which England as a whole, and I may add this Diocese in an exceptional degree, is adorned. Those fabrics are messengers of spiritual truth, perpetually set before the eyes of men. I am glad to think that everywhere this truth is felt in more or less degree. Men are always proud of their parish Church, and are willing to make sacrifices for its sake. This feeling should be carefully cherished, as a basis for further teaching. The clergyman is the official guardian of the fabric of the Church; and its neatness within and without depend upon his carefulness. The surroundings of the Church are as important as the structure itself. A trim garden looks ill beside an ill-kept churchyard. I am glad to think that there are no remaining instances of a comfortable parsonage beside a dilapidated Church.

If the Church itself be a perpetual sermon, you must do all that you can to give it point and to enforce its application. There are two ways in which this can be done, two plain methods which I would like to think were universally adopted. The Church must not only be cared for, but must be used. People must be exhorted to feel that it is their Church, open always for their use, ready with its suggestiveness at

every crisis of their life, having a message for all their needs. We are maiming the meaning and usefulness of our Churches, if they are kept closed from one Sunday night till the next Sunday morning. We are directly teaching that religion is a matter for Sunday services, and is not vitally connected with our week-day life. I am very strongly of opinion that every Church should be open and accessible to all at all times of every day. I know all that can be said against this suggestion. I know that people rarely use the Church when it is open. Can it be expected that the habit will grow up at once? I know all that is said about inconveniences, and dangers of loss, or of irreverence. My only answer is: You may have some cases of foolish conduct sometimes; but then they give you an opportunity of speaking on the subject directly, which may be of incalculable use. There is perhaps no point on which you would be so sure of carrying everybody's sympathy with you: and to fan men's latent feeling of reverence into conscious expression is a most real advance. But I do not think that there is any real danger to be apprehended,—and I speak with some knowledge. For many years past I have been in the habit of examining parish Churches in various parts of England. I have gained considerable knowledge of the way in which they are cared for, and used. In my experience I should say roughly that about half the parish Churches stand open; that those which stand open are much better cared for than those which do not; that they are as a rule more highly decorated, and might be supposed to have more to fear from mis-

chief; that I can discover no peculiarities of position or of local conditions which determines the matter, but apparently only the feeling of the clergyman; that where the Church is open, there is generally affixed to the door a notice to that effect, with a request that any one entering the Church would pray for himself and for the parish. I think that a mere notice on the Church door, "This Church is open for prayer and meditation," is of inestimable value as asserting the place which these two things ought to hold in the life of every Christian. Let me repeat; the Church itself is the first and most visible instrument of Christian teaching: it ought to be used to the full, and its meaning emphasised with all distinctness: let it be open at all times to all men.

But if the people are to be taught to use their Church, the clergyman must not only afford them opportunities, but must set them an example. The daily saying of Morning and Evening Prayer in Church is of great importance. Again, I know all that can be said by one who prefers to say them privately, because he is hopeless of being joined by any of his parishioners in Church. But the fact remains that you are directed to say them in Church, unless you are reasonably let or hindered: and the absence of others is certainly no hindrance to you. But I would call your attention to some definite points of practical value. You are trying to teach your people to pray: can you be doing your best if you do not bring it before them as a privilege, which you yourself enjoy to exercise? You may go about your parish and exhort to prayer: you may pray with the sick and those in calamity;

but you will best enforce your lessons by your example. The sound of the bell, especially when the listener knows that it is being rung by your own hands, if it does not operate as a summons, is yet a reminder, and brings a message of consolation and encouragement. It is well that you should pray with your people; it is well that they should know that you also pray for them. And I think there are few cases in which daily prayers are said in Church where a few pious souls do not gather occasionally after a time.

There are also other reasons of much importance for daily services—reasons which affect the usefulness of a country clergyman. It is of great service to himself that he should have some regular and fixed points in his daily work in his parish. It is inevitable from the nature of a clergyman's duties that they should be left to his own discretion, and that the times of their performance should be at his own choice. The first thing that every man ought to strive to do is to be a law unto himself, and to economise his time by the formation of habits for its allotment. The existence of fixed times for daily Morning and Evening Prayer is a great help, and enables him to adjust other things accordingly. A regular hour for Church leads to a regular visit to the school. For the same reason it is a great help to his people. It vastly increases his accessibility, which is a matter of no little importance. Villagers are often shy; and many, who wish to see you, will not go so far as call upon you through a dread of clothing their question with undue importance in the eyes of others; but if they know that you are almost always at Church at

fixed hours twice a day, they know where and when you can easily be found, and have a means of familiar intercourse which nothing else can give.

Again, the fact that you show yourself to have definite duties at definite hours assimilates your life to theirs, and makes the nature and aim of your work much more comprehensible to their minds. They can understand that a man is caring for them in very deed when they see him daily going regularly to the Church and the school, so setting before them the unmistakable outlines of a life devoted to prayer and teaching.

The Clergyman as a Teacher.

And the true teacher is also the constant learner. The life which is built upon regular habits economises time and generates energy which can be usefully applied in manifold ways. The clergyman of a country parish has time to spare, which he can devote to many profitable purposes. He may be interested in affairs, local and diocesan, and may be able to lend practical help to the vast machinery by which the world's business has perforce to be carried on. He may be a student, and so able to carry far beyond his immediate sphere the spirit of his desire to do good service. Some form of interest, profitable to ourselves and others, it is well that all of us should strive to acquire, outside the work immediately committed to us. No man should always harp upon one string; all should have a resource within themselves which is sufficiently strong to prevent them from being entirely under the influence of their daily work.

The incumbent of a country parish might well regard it as a positive duty to have a pursuit which enabled him to serve the Church beyond the limits of his own immediate sphere.

I need not remark on the inevitable inequality of population between parishes, though this inequality is not so great as it seems at first sight. In the dense population of a town the clergyman's sphere of work is definitely limited. There are many agencies at work; he has his own work to do, and can refer to other sources for help in all save his spiritual functions. But in the country it is otherwise; and the country clergyman, who will do his best, soon learns that he must be resourceful, and that there is a steady demand on his energies in unexpected ways. He should be ready to turn his hand to anything that is needed, and should fit himself to be the adviser of his people in the difficulties which are inherent in their actual life. There is much which he ought to try and learn for their sakes. But still, that demand is not continuous, and he has leisure to devote to purposes of his own.

The pressure upon the town clergyman for active work, the demand upon his time by the constant growth of new organisations, the constant discovery of new openings as life becomes more complex, affect him perhaps in no way more injuriously than by curtailing his time and his capacity for study. Yet study is a definite part of a clergyman's duty, undertaken solemnly at Ordination, and binding upon him as an obligation. I think that in this matter he may fairly look to his brethren in the country for help. There

ought to be many of them who are practised theologians, pursuing special branches of the subject, and able from time to time to take a survey of some phase of modern thought. I have endeavoured to put this object before you by suggesting the delivery of theological lectures at convenient centres in the Diocese. I think that for the purpose of such lectures a Diocese might well become self-supporting, and that the ranks of the country clergy ought to supply men who are able to bring the products of their greater leisure to the use of their more busily occupied brethren.

There are, further, other purposes of a less ambitious kind to which attention might be devoted. Popular lectures and addresses of various kinds are needed in many parishes, and might be supplied by a little organisation. It is not a severe tax upon any man to undertake one subject at least in the year, and offer his services to his brethren. I would merely instance one direction in which such labour would seem to me to be particularly profitable. The subject of Foreign Missions seems to me to be one on which people are very inadequately informed. It is generally left to missionary meetings held under the auspices of a particular Society. I do not undervalue such meetings or the impressions which they produce. But their object is to awaken interest in the Society rather than to give connected information. I do not propose to meddle with them, but I would like to see them supplemented in a systematic way. Why should not some of the clergy in each Deanery undertake to study, each of them, the history of one particular mission, so as to be able to give a consecutive account

of the country, the people, the nature of the missionary work, its progress and its prospects? In this way interest in missions would be carried further than it is at present, and would rest upon a more intelligent basis. It would be associated with an amount of geographical and ethnological information which would be greatly appreciated. It would tend to put missionary enterprise in its relation to the progress of civilisation, and might be used to teach lessons of universal application. The lecturer himself would find the advantage of having a definite object before him, and would feel a stimulus to direct his general reading. An interchange of such lectures would provide a ready means of supplying profitable instruction for winter's evenings in adjoining parishes.

Parochial History.

There is another subject with which every clergyman who enjoys leisure ought to try to make himself conversant—I mean the history of his own parish and district. I speak as one who remembers that one of my predecessors in this See—Bishop White Kennett was, as a parish priest, almost the founder of the study of parochial antiquities, a subject which has owed much to the industry and zeal of the clergy, and one which has been naturally relegated to their care. It is a subject of great interest and of great value for the increase of historical knowledge. But I am not putting it before you on that ground, but on its utility for the purpose of broadening the interests of your people. Interest begins in that which is close at hand. Historic sites and landmarks, the fortunes of families,

the architectural growth of your parish Church, the ancient manor and its customs, the enclosure of common lands, the traces of previous modes of cultivation —anything which tells the story of the long process by which the place in which your people live came to be what it now is—appeals at once to the mind. It is well that men should know the value of the heritage which they now enjoy, and so should feel their responsibility for its maintenance and improvement. It is well that they should know the influences which moulded the past, and should be taught their abiding force. In a country village especially, teaching cannot be confined to the pulpit, but must be carried into every profitable sphere. Simple talk with simple folk about things which interest yourself is always sure to be appreciated, and will be profitable for good to yourself as well as to them. Whatever your personal interests may be—and every man ought to have some—make them available to those around you. A country parish is only an extended family, and each should contribute his best to the good of all. It is by identifying your life with that of your people that you will best succeed in teaching them the high truths entrusted to your care. To them all else leads up, and by them everything is illumined.

Clerical Incomes.

There is one personal matter affecting the country clergy on which I would wish to say a few words, the depreciation of clerical incomes. Few parts of England have suffered more severely from agricultural depression than this. Yet I must express my surprise

and admiration at the fortitude with which the result has been borne by the clergy at large. Where all have suffered they have been unwilling to urge any exceptional claims, though the loss has undoubtedly weighed exceptionally on them. They have been content to share without complaint the misfortunes of their neighbours. I was of opinion that something should be done to help cases of genuine hardship; and the Diocesan Conference last year agreed to the formation of a Sustentation Fund to aid impoverished benefices. It would seem, however, that there is not much belief in the possibility of dealing with this matter by means of a central fund. It is, I gather, judged more advisable to deal with such cases either by the permanent augmentation of the endowment of small benefices, or by the union of two when their separate revenues are inadequate, or by providing for them by local effort. Anyhow, the contributions which have been received for the purpose are very slight, amounting only to £332, of which £200 comes from one source. I notice also that only twelve Churches in the Diocese have appropriated any part of their contributions to the Diocesan Society towards this object.

I can only infer that the clergy as a body are unwilling to plead exceptional poverty. I know that his clerical income rarely forms the entire maintenance of the clergyman, who generally gives his services without question of exact remuneration. I have been cheered by many instances of unworldliness, and of a single-hearted desire to find only a sphere for service. Men have told me repeatedly of acces-

sions to their private means as reasons why they could afford to go to ill-paid parishes. Curates have voluntarily waived their stipends that more workers might be supplied in large parishes Men labour on without repining, and ask for no recognition for work, which is to a large extent voluntary.

My clerical brethren will not be surprised at this, and may wonder why I mention it. I do so, because I think it is sometimes well that such facts should be recorded—that men should know how much quiet heroism is enlisted in the service of God's Church. That service has lost none of its attraction and none of its power; for it brings the soul into constant intimacy with other souls; it deals not with what is superficial and transitory, but what is eternal in the life of man. It reveals new signs of God's purposes, and of the operations of His Spirit; it shows the dignity and splendour, if it also shows the littleness and misery of humanity. The smallest sphere is infinitely large; and the training of a few in an out-of-the-way village ranks with God as high and as holy as the wider activity of which the world takes note. Happy is he who in his country parish never forgets this truth, but, strong in the simplicity which comes from communing with God, walks amongst his people as in very truth a minister of life—life which begins here but lasts for ever; life whose power is increasingly perceived.

For be assured of this: a country parish is a severe test of a man's absolute reality. Powers of eloquence, of organisation, of business capacity, will avail nothing, unless they flow from a heart devoted to God. Criti-

cism is keener in a country village than in a large town. Every part of your life is lived in public, is scanned and commented on. You belong entirely to your people, and can win them only by your absolute sincerity. You must be their friend before you can be their teacher. Such a work requires your best energies constantly employed. "All service ranks the same with God," and with Him "there is no last nor first". May He of his mercy write this lesson on the hearts of all of us, and enable us evermore to keep Him before our eyes in all that we do and say.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN CONFERENCE, OCTOBER, 1895.

I AM glad to think that I have not yet been Bishop of this See long enough to have exhausted all possibilities of novelty. This is the first time that I have been privileged to welcome the Diocesan Conference at Peterborough; and I venture to think that there is an exceptional impressiveness attaching to our meeting under the shadow of the great Mother Church of the Diocese. Each of the centres at which we assemble brings its own lesson. Amid the busy industry of Leicester and Northampton we are admonished of the greatness of the work which is imposed in our generation on the activity of the Church of Christ. Here we are reminded of the achievements of the Church in the past, of its labours as a pioneer of civilisation, of the loftiness of its aspirations, and its power to express them in a form which is vocal throughout the ages. It is in the combination of these lessons that we find our strength. There is much for us to do: but much was done by those who went before us. The best work, and the truest in the past, was that which was unobserved by men, because it was done directly for God. What we do is useless, unless it sets before the consciences of men principles

and truths which come from above. The Church has no independent existence, no objects of its own to pursue. It acts in absolute dependence on its Master; it has nothing else to do save to set Him forward; it makes no claim save that of liberty to teach the truth entrusted to its care.

We all feel this; and I suppose that when we meet at such times as these, we look at the programme and wish either for more novelty, or for greater breadth, in the subjects selected for discussion. But how little are we, any of us, really responsible for the direction which our activities are compelled to take. We have to talk about matters, not because they are of primary interest, or it may be of usefulness to ourselves, but because they challenge our opinion and demand our action. Questions come and go, and we have to face them. There is a mischievous tendency in phantoms to clothe themselves with flesh and blood unless they be speedily laid to rest. We have to turn from what we would most wish to do to what is most needful to be done. We would wish to spend our energies entirely in making progress: we are compelled to spend them greatly in maintaining what has been already won.

I have had occasion to speak to you more than once on the maintenance of our National Church in its integrity. Our efforts have succeeded for the present, and we have occasion to be thankful. But I am convinced of the great need of continuing our efforts in a cause which was thrust upon us, and was not of our own seeking. I think that the attack upon the Church in Wales has done us a great deal of good.

It has driven us to speak out; and I venture to think that we spoke with moderation, with dignity and with careful regard for truth. The movement for Church defence aimed at correcting misrepresentations, at giving trustworthy information about the Church and its historical position. This information has undoubtedly awakened much interest in unexpected quarters. I heard of an old Nonconformist lady, who read through every word of the debates in Parliament on the Welsh Disestablishment Bill. She followed them with growing amazement, which soon became absorbing interest. She rapidly became a staunch supporter of Establishment, without altering her adhesion to her own body. But she saw, as I think many Nonconformists saw, the great harm which would be inflicted by Disestablishment on the teaching of religion, and the very small advantage which would accrue to any particular body. She was convinced of the great benefit of a National Church, and of the justice of the claims of the Church of England to occupy that position. Now this is the feeling which we wish to create in the community. We wish to impress them with a sense of the largeness and gravity of the issue at stake. It is a question which concerns England, not the Church only, which concerns every individual Englishman, not Churchmen only. It is the growth of this conviction which will accomplish the object which we have in view, the removal of the question of Disestablishment beyond the sphere of party politics. The question was raised in detail, was raised, in my opinion, with unpardonable levity, on the ground of a local demand at a particular

election. The ground asserted was the absolute certainty that that majority was permanent, and expressed an unalterable wish on the part of the people of Wales. You know how that majority has signally diminished, especially in the great centres of population. It is quite clear that Wales has no desperate earnestness about the matter, and that reflection has brought its lessons. I trust that this will produce its effect on the minds of politicians, who may learn that the popular confidence is not to be gained by over-readiness to carry out what is supposed to be the popular will. I do not think that Englishmen feel any respect for the man who is willing to abandon his own principles to obtain their votes. Nonconformists do not thank a Churchman for subordinating his Churchmanship to their prejudices, and expressing a chivalrous desire to force upon his Church that superior liberty which he is ignorantly willing to credit them with possessing. I think that what has already been done, in the way of more accurate teaching about the Church, has produced considerable effect. We must see that we do not rest contented with immediate success. We must continue as we have begun, till we have placed the Church beyond the reach of party politics altogether. This can be done by showing historically its close connection with the national life of England. It must be done also, practically, by showing that the existence of a National Church makes provision for the spiritual needs of all: while it does not interfere with full liberty of combination on the part of those who prefer other forms of worship. To me, it seems, that a general

system, as large as may be on the one side, surrounded by voluntary societies on the other, expresses what England at present needs. The action of these systems on one another may be freely permitted, certainly ought not to be resented. If we agree to live and work side by side with mutual respect, we may hope to reach that good understanding, which alone can bring agreement. The best features in the recent struggle are that English Nonconformists have shown much good feeling; and that Parliamentary discussion has raised the matter to a serious consideration of great principles.

You will have observed that there is a general impression that an opportunity is now afforded for Church Reform. I do not much like the phrase, because it is misleading. But the term *Reform* has now become chronic in political language, and means, not so much the removal of abuses, as the progressive adaptation of machinery to new conditions.

One of the points in which change has long been deemed necessary is that of Patronage. Originally, a lay Patron was the landowner who had built, and in some cases, endowed the Church. He was universally regarded as the best representative of the parishioners for the purpose of choosing an incumbent. The object of the Archbishops' Patronage Bill is to bring back the Patron to his original position of trustee, and to provide an appeal on the part of the parishioners against any supposed misuse of his trust. This Bill has been discussed in your Ruridecanal Conferences, and has met with general approval. I hope that it will soon become law, with

such modifications as are necessary to do justice to all concerned.

This is, I think, the only definite point in which the institutions of the Church need reform. But it must be admitted that the Church seems, in the popular estimation, to be without the necessary powers to make changes in its system. This arises from the fact that the laity of the Church are, for legislative purposes, represented only by Parliament. Parliament, as now constituted, is too busy to occupy itself with the affairs of the Church in matters of detail. It is only on questions of importance that ecclesiastical legislation is introduced into Parliament, and Parliament can hardly be said to welcome its introduction. I do not think that this is, in practice, a matter of so much moment as it appears to be in theory.

As a matter of fact, the Church does not require perpetual change. There is no wish to make any considerable alterations; there may be some points in which greater versatility might be desirable, but even this is a very open question. The Church represents the most permanent element in society, and its progress is by slow adjustment, not by decided change. I imagine that any one who contrasted the Sunday services in a large town Church at the present day with those of fifty years ago, would be conscious of a very vast difference. Yet this has been wrought by a gradual process of adjustment to the altered needs and tastes of the people, with no legislative change, except the simple provisions of the Act of Uniformity Amendment Act. I doubt if any further latitude in

the nature of our services would commend itself to the minds of Churchmen in general.

But although we may not desire change in the form of legislative enactment, it is a fact that this is the form in which Englishmen have grown accustomed to discuss matters. Every society for any beneficent purpose hastens to prepare a Bill, because criticism gathers round definite proposals. Englishmen are hard to move on speculative grounds; they fight shy of ideas as such: they are only interested when something seems likely to be done. It is astonishing how much loose talk is allowed to pass unanswered; but the moment it takes a definite shape it is rudely dismissed. This is our way: we do not ask, "What do you think?" but "What do you want to do?"

Now, frankly, I do not think that there is much which Churchmen want to have done, as regards their Church; but it is difficult to discover what they think, till they feel that they have some power to act, should they think fit.

Among the changes which have taken place in late years, the most noticeable is the increased interest taken by the laity in the business of the Church, and the full recognition of their influence. Church Congresses are open to all. The Convocation of Canterbury has called to its aid a House of Laymen. Diocesan Conferences and Ruri-decanal Conferences are universal, and are representative of clergy and laity equally.

It is, I think, a fact that the opinions of the laity have every opportunity of making themselves heard, and are, as a matter of fact, of dominant weight.

Yet I imagine that the opinions of clergy and laity alike are more definitely formulated, and more vigorously expressed, about matters where legislation is impending, than in matters where legislation is remote. Again, I say, an Englishman is chary of discussing principles, unless he gets at them in the form of practical details. Nor does he care to part with his opinion unless it is likely to have some definite weight. Ultimately, he prefers to have something before him to which he can say *yes* or *no*. For these reasons, I think that our organisation would have more life if it had more recognised powers. I could conceive a plan by which Convocation would be an Ecclesiastical Parliament, Diocesan Conference an Ecclesiastical County Council, and Ruri-decanal Conference an Ecclesiastical District Council. In saying this, I, of course, mean that all ecclesiastical legislation should be laid on the table of Parliament, and should receive the assent of the Crown. But legislation which has passed through the various stages of discussion by representatives of those whom it concerned, would be in the same position as if it had passed a Grand Committee.

You will say this is a large scheme, and I will confess that I do not suppose it will be realised immediately. But I am not indulging merely in that love of constitution making or mending, which is inherent in every Englishman. I have a direct application in view. We are to discuss the question of ecclesiastical vestries. You will have observed, that in my recapitulation of the heads of an ecclesiastical system of local government, I stopped short at the Ecclesiastical Parish Council, which is the keystone

to the whole. Everything depends on what can be made of the vestry. Its members must be the constituents of our representative system; and until we have the vestry satisfactorily defined, both in its members and their powers, nothing further can be done. It is for this reason that I shall await with interest the expression of your opinions on this point. It is a matter on which the experience of laymen must have much to say.

This is a large question and a far-reaching subject. We have another for discussion, which is definite, and pressing for solution. I mean the Bill for the maintenance of voluntary schools. You know how this Bill was prepared by a committee, selected by the two Archbishops. It has the practical advantage of not being a novel proposal, but founded on the system which has been found to work well in Ireland, where difficulties are greater than they are with us. Legislation on the education question has been impeded, not by poverty of resource, but by excessive fertility of suggestion. The difficulty has been to combine on any one scheme. It is obvious that combination on the part of Churchmen is absolutely necessary if anything is to be done. It is equally obvious that on this point public opinion needs education, and that we must enforce principles before we can obtain assent to details. Now, the great objection likely to be raised to the Bill is that it is a reversal of former policies. This would be a serious objection if it were well founded. But, first of all, the only educational policy which we have pursued is that all our children should be educated. This is so good and wise and worthy a

policy, that it is very undesirable to set beside it, as on the same level, any temporary arrangements about the method of attaining this end. These were always left open for consideration ; and, indeed, almost every point of the original scheme has been changed. Compulsory education has been followed by free education. The elements on which all calculations were founded have been altered. We have learned from experience about every part of the original design. It is no change of policy to press for a readjustment of the system to the unforeseen and unexpected obligations which have been imposed on voluntary schools.

But further, what is called the policy which was adopted about the teaching of religion, has turned out to be no policy at all. It is founded upon a conception which is already politically obsolete. Let me try and explain my meaning clearly, at the risk of being tedious. We English boast that we are a practical people. That is quite true on the whole ; but, when we indulge in idealism, we show a grim capacity for creating impossibilities which goes beyond that of other people. It was England that created that monster, whose scientific merits are now disregarded, because of the horror which he inspires to eyes once open to his unreality—I mean, the economic man of political economy. Man, devoid of moral sense, free from moral responsibility, pursuing only the acquisition of wealth, was, for a long time, taken as the unit of society for the purposes of legislation, and mankind was promised universal happiness as the result of the unfettered action of such a being. We are now living in a period of reaction against this

conception of man in his relation to society. I suppose that every one, nowadays, recognises the mistakes that were made by the construction of this abstract notion of man. As a matter of fact, it is dangerous to legislate for an abstract conception of what man ought to be. Diversity is, of course, an inconvenience to the legislator: it would be much more convenient for him if all men thought and behaved alike. What he most wants is a well-ordered machine. Now it was natural, in the days in which the economic man still flourished, to extend this principle of abstraction whenever and wherever it was necessary. When a religious difficulty cropped up about education, legislation cautiously and tentatively proceeded to invent another ideal being, the undenominational man. He was constructed on the same principles as the economic man. The economic man was a machine for money getting, carefully divested of every human attribute, and therefore calculable at every turn. The undenominational man had for his subject-matter religion, and therefore could not be entirely inhuman, but he was obtained by cutting out of his opinions everything which any one else objected to. You will see what an impalpable phantom was the result. I should like to ask members of Parliament whether, after their election, they proceed to constitute for themselves an ideal citizen, by eliminating every point on which they believe their constituents to differ in opinion. Having so obtained their unit of society, are they prepared to consider him as the sole object of their legislative care? Yet this is what has been done about the teaching of religion at the public expense. That it has not turned out so ill

as might have been expected is due to the common sense and good feeling which, at the bottom, Englishmen possess. This, however, ought not to blind us to the absurdity, for it is nothing less, of the attempt in itself. I therefore think that we are rendering a valuable service to the community at large by stating our grievance and demanding a remedy. Our grievance is briefly this: that the State, for purposes of mere convenience, has created an ideal citizen for whom it will legislate, and has made inadequate provision for those who do not choose to accommodate themselves to the prescribed pattern. What we ask is that the State should take its citizens as they really are, and should provide for their actual wants. We desire a definite religious education for the children of such parents as require it. We ask that existing schools which aim at securing this end, should not be placed at a disadvantage. This is the one object in the Bill which is before us for discussion. Its introduction into Parliament will lead to a full consideration of the principle on which it is based; and I feel sure that the justice of that principle will soon be recognised. It is to our consistency in expressing, and to our willingness in applying this principle that our success will be due. We must be careful, above all things, to urge the justice of our claim, to make it clear that we are not striving for what affects ourselves alone, but are only anxious to maintain a conception of the nature of education, which we believe to be of vital importance. We ask the co-operation of all who are in favour of education founded on religion. We wish for every religious body, however small, to possess the

same powers as ourselves. We very decidedly are of opinion that the rivalry of religious systems should not gather round the teaching of the young; but we think that the only way to avoid this is to make provision for satisfying all. This seems to me to be true tolerance, and to recognise real equality. I rejoice in this matter to think that the Church is setting forth a higher and truer conception of liberty than that which finds expression in the warfare of contemporary politics.

I may be too sanguine, but to me it seems that we of the Church of England are being led, in this our day, to a deeper sense of our position and its responsibilities. We stand at the parting of many ways, and our eyes can look on many sides. It is our great good fortune, in the providence of God, that we have set up no barriers for ourselves, that we are cut off from no one who speaks and acts for God. In late years we have been steadily realising this truth. We have been growing in Christian sympathy and in forbearance amongst ourselves. The hope of the future lies in the steady growth of these qualities. And it is impossible not to see that their growth is universal. Christendom is tired of warfare: it recognises the need, not of agreement—that cannot come at command—but of a better understanding of one another. Greater intercourse between Churchmen and Nonconformists is producing happy results. For myself I would thankfully bear witness to the personal friendliness of Nonconformists, both ministers and people, throughout my Diocese. On the other side, the fact that Pope Leo XIII. should have issued a letter to

the English people is at least a manifestation of good will. I do not like to criticise that letter in detail. It was addressed to the English people, probably as an indication that no answer was expected. From me, at least, it shall receive none. I think that we may accept a token of friendliness and of Christian sympathy in the spirit which it expresses. We must expect that every one who speaks of Christian unity should speak from his own point of view. That is inevitable. Every one contemplates unity on the supposition that every one else will ultimately agree with himself. How could he do otherwise? The first step must necessarily be to make us all more deeply conscious of the intellectual, the historical and the sentimental differences which keep us asunder. But intercourse, friendly feeling and reflection will enable us or our children to remove misunderstanding, to dissolve the veil of sentiment, to go behind the prejudices created by mistakes and misdoings in the past, to separate what is accidental and temporary from what is essential, to discover the real importance of the points which keep us asunder, to raise controversy above passion, to discuss principles without being troubled by the thoughts of temporary loss or gain. What we have to do in the first place is to remove the obstinacy and prejudice in ourselves, which prevent us from dealing fairly with our brethren. This is a moral question. Controversy is unfruitful when it is blinded by prejudice; it is only useful when it is directed towards the discovery of truth. It is premature to discuss at present methods of reunion: they must be left in the hands of God. But there

is a certain danger lest anything like discussion of practical points should lead to a renewal of old controversies, and should revive the old spirit of bitterness. I trust that this will be absent from anything which may be said in our Conference. Our object is simply to recognise a spirit which is undoubtedly growing strong in the Church to-day, and to consider our own individual part towards a movement whose strength lies in its existence rather than in its practical form.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN CONFERENCE, 1896.

I CAN, first of all, only express my pleasure at meeting you once more. I trust that each Conference brings us all closer together, and gives us a higher sense of our common responsibility. To me, at all events, this has always been the result. I do not find that work grows less as I know more of the Diocese: on the other hand it constantly increases, and each thing accomplished only suggests how much remains to do. It can only be done by united effort, and anything that leads us to know one another better begets, I hope, that mutual trust which alone renders progress possible.

I think we are reminded, when we look back upon the subjects of our discussion last year, that there is not much cause for fear lest things should advance in too great a hurry. We spoke about our schools, and hoped that by this time our difficulties concerning them would be at an end. This is not the case: we are still where we were, and hope is still deferred. We must await the future with such resignation as we can command. I will not consider in detail the reasons for our disappointment. A measure was introduced which dealt with the question of Primary and Secondary Education on principles which were

generally recognised to be both just and sagacious. The House of Commons admitted this fact by passing the Second Reading of the Bill by a very large majority. But after thus fully recognising the excellence of the principles on which the measure was founded, it proceeded to recognise the difficulty which always exists in giving practical effect to excellent principles. There was so much to be thought out, and so much more to be said without thinking, that the wheels of the chariot were stopped by the excessive anxiety of everybody to grease them. Education is a subject about which every educated man feels bound to have an opinion; and in the multitude of counsellors there was abundant safety, but no success. The only moral to be drawn is, I think, that a measure of organic change is extremely difficult in England, perhaps impossible. We are willing to amend details; we are not willing to revise any general system. It is no longer peculiar to one political party to insist that changes must be made slowly and tentatively. Indeed one of the most remarkable features of the criticism on the Bill was the cautious attitude adopted towards any further extension of Local Self-government. There was a general feeling that the revised system recently established had still to grow into a greater familiarity with the duties already imposed upon it. Rather than overweight it with new responsibility, we must remain content with the rule of a department of experts. The prevailing opinion seemed to be that the least troublesome form of government was bureaucracy, tempered by grumbling.

So much, I think, has been learned, and we have now to see what can be done on a smaller scale. It cannot be said that the friends of voluntary schools were unanimous in support of a measure which had for its main object that of permanently incorporating voluntary schools in the system of National Education. It remains to be seen if they can be unanimous in favour of any other proposal. I regard it as of the greatest importance that such unanimity should be reached, and that quickly. It is of course natural for every one to display his interest in any measure by considering how it will affect that district with which he himself is most familiar. But it seems to me that we must try to take a larger view. The great difficulty which the supporters of voluntary schools have had to face is not so much the actual strain upon their resources at any given moment, as general uncertainty about the future. Perhaps no practicable scheme can meet the needs of every locality in the most effective way; but any scheme would be valuable which left us with an exact knowledge of what we had to do. This would make organisation possible, and many would be ready to make sacrifices if they had a definite end in view. I will not trouble you with any views of my own about questions of detail, because I wish to keep an open mind just at present. You know that the Church has taken a new departure in constitutional procedure, in consequence of this question. A meeting is to be held early in November of the two Convocations, sitting as a joint Committee of all their members. It is hoped that, after full discussion, an agreement will be reached, that the decision

of the Committee will be endorsed by both Houses, and will be loyally accepted by all Churchmen. Such an example would be of great weight. I think it is necessary to show that excellent intentions and fervent zeal are not incompatible with practical wisdom; and I commend beforehand the conclusions of that Conference to your acceptance, whatever they may be.

The late session of Parliament brought into prominence another question of importance, which had almost been forgotten. On two divisions the House of Lords affirmed the principle of altering our Marriage Laws by permitting Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister. As the whole question of the Marriage Laws is beset with difficulties, I will venture to make a few general remarks on the subject as a whole, and will try to touch only upon general principles.

The subject of marriage was one which soon forced itself upon the attention of the Christian Church. Already in the Apostolic age St. Paul found it necessary to warn the Corinthians that a general appreciation of Christian liberty was not a trustworthy guide in this matter, but that rigid rules must be enforced. In fact the work of the early Church, in its relation to society, was to build up again individual character which had been enfeebled by the decay of religious sanctions. It was because Christianity made men, and strong men, that it took its place in the system of the world. For the purpose of renewing character, the Church guarded and fostered family life; and the State welcomed its assistance. Marriage and all that concerned it was left to the Church, and the Church's regulations were framed by reference to the spirit of

the regulations laid down in the Levitical Law. It is important to notice that, in this matter especially, the Levitical enactments rest upon historical experience—"Ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you; for they committed all these things, therefore I abhorred them". The people of Canaan were corrupt because their family life had decayed from want of self-restraint: therefore they were doomed to fall before a stock, which though less martial, was more vigorous, because more cleanly and more disciplined. The subject is presented in the Mosaic Law in such a way as to reveal the working of a great historical law, applicable to every stage of civilisation, and universal in its operations. With this law before it, explained by the great principle of a Divine revelation, emphatically re-affirmed by our Lord, that man and wife "are no more twain, but one flesh," the Christian Church enacted that marriage meant, not merely the union of two individuals, but the entrance of each into the family of the other. A man stood to his wife's relations as he did to his own. This is a simple and consistent principle; on it the Christian family has grown up.

For a long time the subject of marriage was left by the State in the hands of the Church. I am not prepared to defend all the legislation of the Church on this matter. But with the growth of the State there came a time when it took into its own hands all legislative functions. The State took over the Marriage Law of the Church, and now administers it in its own courts. I call your attention to this point, because there is some ambiguity in a phrase which is continu-

ally used, "the Law of the Church". This may mean either (1) those principles of Divine Law contained in Scripture, which the Church is bound always to urge upon the world, or (2) those legal enactments which the Church made at a time when she acted as the organ of the Christian society for certain administrative purposes which are now discharged by the State. I am not now concerned with the authority which may be claimed for the latter of these; but it is not the same as the former, and must not be confounded with it.

What now happens is this. The system of Marriage Laws, which the Church erected on the basis of principle, and maintained on that basis so long as it was committed to her charge, is now under the guardianship of the State, and is consequently exposed to criticism and amendment on the ground of social expediency. Principles and expediency are not necessarily opposed: in fact principle is only expediency on a large scale. We have to prove it to be so in any case in which we are challenged.

Now in this particular matter the reason, from expediency, is quite obvious. It is necessary that the intimacy of family life should be maintained against any possibility of sexual relationship. When a man marries, it is equally desirable that the new family into which he is admitted should be guarded against the possibility of any such relationship in the future, as that possibility would be a bar to complete intimacy. The justice of these propositions has been universally recognised, and they have been absorbed until they are assumed to have become instinctive.

It is dangerous even to reason about them, or to call them into question. But they are called into question, and we must face that fact. We must make it clear that we are not maintaining antiquated ecclesiastical prejudices, but are upholding the principles on which family life is founded.

They are called in question on the matter of Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister. The argument of those who favour this exemption is something like this: "We recognise the necessity of an education of mankind on this point; but we think that that education has done its work in the past. It has created a healthy instinct which may be trusted. All right-minded men are now sufficiently interested in the maintenance of family life; and indeed this change is a step in that direction. A widower with young children is often placed in great difficulty; when his wife has been removed, he wishes to put his children under the care of one like her, and who is so suitable for that purpose as her sister?"

Every step in that argument, which I think I have stated fairly, requires criticism. (1) First of all, the phrase, "the Education of Mankind," is misleading. Education is a matter of the individual. All that society can do is to surround him with the means of education, to give him guidance, to point out what is expected of him. It is the natural man who comes into the world; society has to train him into a social man, just as religion tries to form him into a spiritual man. If this process is to be accomplished it must rest on principles in both cases. Society can, as little as Christianity, afford to whittle away its principles to

suit everybody's whims. It is quite true that in the present day we recognise freedom, and minimise restriction as much as possible. But freedom involves restraint, and the removal of small restrictions has been beneficial so far as it has substituted for petty regulations general principles, which carry with them a more direct appeal to men's intelligence and sense of duty. The abolition of this particular restraint leads on to no higher principle; it only suggests that all principles are undesirable or useless, and that men should be free from all restraint. This seems to me profoundly anti-social.

(2) But then we are told to trust to healthy human instinct. Instinct is a vague term, and I will not take up your time by an attempt to define it. But we all know how imperious is the instinct which prompts to gratification of passion; and we do not know of any correspondingly powerful instinct which restrains it. It needs restraint from without, and it needs all the restraints which can be devised. To suggest the removal of reasonable and intelligible restrictions which society has erected in the past for its preservation—to tamper with principles and dissolve a logical system which immediately affects us all, so as to meet the convenience of a very few—this seems to me to betray ignorance of human nature, and of social duty.

(3) But, it is said, the proposed change would remedy a grievance, and would in itself be harmless, nay in many cases advantageous. On this point we must strike a balance of advantages. The change would impair for a great majority the relationship of sister-in-law: it would advantage only a very small

minority. Not every man is married ; of married men not all have the misfortune to become widowers ; of widowers not all wish to marry again ; of those who do a very small proportion wish to marry their late wife's sister. Probably there are quite as many who do not wish to marry again, but to commit their children to the care of their wife's sister without marrying her. By sanctioning this change in the Marriage Law, many would be deprived of a privilege which they now possess ; and those, whose wives have sisters, would be placed in a different relation towards their sisters-in-law from that which now exists. But, it is urged, the advantage of a stepmother, who would naturally care for her sister's children, is greater than the counterbalancing loss. So far as my experience goes, the care of children depends on moral qualities, and cannot be guaranteed without them. A good woman, who loved her husband, would care for his children because they were his ; if she did not love her husband, she would not be more disposed to care for the children because they were those of her dead sister. Much feeble sentiment is expended on this point by those who are caught by sentiment. No proposal could do more to lower the sentimental side of marriage. In almost every case of such a union a man would marry the one person of whom it could be said that he deliberately passed her over in making his original choice. Fidelity to the memory of a dead wife is not shown by union with her sister.

Really the desire is felt by few ; but it is represented as a grievance that it may not be legally gratified when it is felt, and illegal unions are sometimes

entered into by people of irreproachable conduct in other respects. These are the real considerations which affect those who are willing to allow this change, and I admit their force. It is natural that society should be willing to meet the wishes of all its members as far as possible, and should be sensitive if its regulations are set aside, without any obviously evil intention, by upright men and women. In most things I would be unwilling to urge any opinion of my own against a change in law proposed on such grounds. But there are some questions on which complaisance is impossible, because we are brought face to face with fundamental principles. However much we may wish to please everybody, we cannot rid ourselves of our duty as trustees of society. To expand and adjust its framework is one thing: to weaken its framework is another. Hitherto the principle embodied in our law has been this: "By marriage a man enters into his wife's family, which becomes to him as his own". If this change were made, we should say: "His wife's family becomes his own, except in the case of the wife's sister, because he might possibly wish to marry her". Could any conclusion be more impotent? Could there be a more complete abdication of the rights of society over its members?

And this is the real point at issue, a point which we are bound to face. Marriage, and all that concerns it, is the most individual and most personal act that man can perform, and entails the most abiding consequences. It is also the one act of his which most closely affects society and provides for its future

What is society to do? To regulate it according to rational principles, and so saddle the individual with a sense of his own responsibility? or to put principles in the background, and make the satisfaction of the individual's unregulated desires the main object of its solicitude? This is a great question to settle, and the legalisation of Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister would practically settle it. That is why Churchmen feel deeply on the matter, and must speak out where Statesmen are silent. They know, certainly the clergy know, how difficult it is to maintain any regulations at all. They know that with a shifting population the restraint of notoriety and public opinion is very small. They know the powerlessness of social instinct in the present day, the number of illicit connexions that are formed, and the need of strong barriers to check unmentionable horrors. No change in the law can cover the breaches that are committed; and breaches which dare not ask for legislative sanction now, will find encouragement from the thought that if they only become more frequent and more notorious, they too will be condoned.

We must expect to find that the subject of the relations between the sexes will always be the great battleground of social principles. It is indeed a fundamental test of the power of self-restraint and subordination to a higher law than individual feeling. It brings into sharp contrast the difference between the materialistic and personal view of life on the one hand, and the spiritual and social on the other. We assert that progress is only possible if men are taught to submit their individual wishes to the common good,

and to find satisfaction in curbing their desire for immediate gratification of their impulses. Is not this a principle all men must wish to foster, which the Church especially is bound to uphold? We hope to see it growing in strength, and emerging as the abiding product of the crude endeavours to grasp the meaning of liberty which have marked the present century. In opposing this change we rest, not upon an out-worn system of restraint upon individual freedom, but upon a true conception of the nature of freedom itself. It is beside the question to urge that this change has been made in other countries, and has done no harm. We do not expect that harm done to the social organism should be at once apparent, that the lowering of the standard by legislation should at once affect the common life. A stream slowly eats away its barriers; it is only the inundation which is sudden. England has not been accustomed to go to other countries for new principles of social life. England has so far been the teacher of the world in the wise co-ordination of individual liberty with social progress. May she never fail in this high duty!

I have spoken about voluntary schools and the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, I fear at undue length, because I propose to submit to you resolutions on these subjects, without inviting discussion. We have other subjects before us to discuss; but it seemed well, at present, that an assembly of Churchmen should record their opinion on points of practical importance. The resolutions are very general, and do not commit you, if you accept them, to the acceptance of my opinions. I can only ask those who

dissent, if there be any, to content themselves with voting against them.

Amongst the subjects which we discussed last year was "The Re-union of Christendom," and the subject still remains prominent in men's minds. It is interesting that English clergymen have been in familiar intercourse with officials of the Roman court, discussing the validity of Anglican Orders. It is interesting that Roman Catholic Ecclesiastics have visited England, and have addressed informal meetings of English Churchmen. It is interesting that an English Bishop should have been deputed to convey the good wishes of the English Church to the Church of Russia on a great public occasion, and that this expression of friendly feeling should have been most cordially received. It is of course personally interesting to myself that I should have been the Bishop so deputed —but that is a detail. All these things are indications of a new and more humane spirit, and are of great promise for the future. They are signs of the growth of a more truly Christian temper, which wishes to rise above prejudice and suspicion; which is free and open, charitable and intelligent; which tries to understand and measure differences, separating what is accidental from what is essential; what is due to historical antagonism in the past from what concerns Christian faith and practice. Let us rejoice in the growth of such a temper; let us see that no narrowness or suspicion in ourselves hinders its growth. Surely it is of God; and we may trust that, though we see no definite end immediately, He is shaping a happier future for His Universal Church.

Our subjects for discussion are important, and, I venture to think, useful. The "Difficulties of the clergy," owing to decrease of income, was before your consideration two years ago. It comes back in the form of a general scheme. I only hope that some definite result will be reached. Our previous effort was not marked with much success, and the opinion of the Diocese seemed very hesitating about what was best to do. It is a matter which rests with the laity, and I hope they will express their opinions fully, and then act upon them vigorously. The subject of Secondary Education had been brought into prominence by the report of a Royal Commission, and by the recent Education Bill. Probably it will be dealt with by Parliament before long. It is well that we should consider how we can help the best interests of education in the better organisation of this most important part of our educational system, which has hitherto been somewhat neglected, and has come into existence haphazard.

The consideration of "Modern objections to definite Christianity" brings us face to face with the most strongly marked tendencies of contemporary thought. In thought, as in all else, there are perpetually changing fashions. Dominant ideas in one branch of knowledge invade other branches and cause a reflex action. Men's opinions do not so much change as their attitude towards their opinions. Men go on saying things with fervour after these things have ceased to have any real meaning for them. They do not so much abandon an untenable position, as they creep out of it. Now our own day has seen a marked change of attitude

towards the Christian Faith. There was a time when many prophesied that its day was past; that science could give a rational explanation of the world and life, to which Christianity, in the absence of knowledge, had given a mystical signification. We have lived through that. We have admired the splendid achievements of science in its own sphere, and we have seen its impotence when it passed beyond that sphere. The great problems of life remain for religion and religion alone, and men have been bound to confess it. Yet in the popular mind retreat from an untenable position is slow and gradual. Men boasted that they could dispense with Christianity; they have found that they cannot. Without it, as a dominant force, our civilisation would go to ruin. "But," they say, "though we want Christianity, we do not want the old-fashioned Christianity, with all its dogmas and antiquated forms. We want a spiritual Christianity, simple, intelligible, appealing directly to men's hearts, teaching them to love one another, leaving alone, as insoluble, all those questions which before occupied the minds of theologians." Well—I will not go on now to point out the ramifications of this conception, or the answers to it. I will leave that to the speakers. It is enough if I indicate to you the nature of the issue that is to be considered.

The remaining subject is one of great interest to the clergy, and I am glad that it is introduced by a layman of such wide sympathy and such practical knowledge of life as Mr. Pell possesses. A friend of much experience remarked to me, "It is time that we counted up what the Ecclesiastical Revival of our

time has accomplished, and what it has failed to accomplish. We have restored our churches; we have brightened our services; we have reached a high level of pastoral efficiency; and we have organised our work. But we have not succeeded in making our churches the home of the people, or in giving worship an intimate connection with common life." I take it that something like this lies at the bottom of many minds. It is not enough that worship should be decorous and stately; it must also become familiar and intimate. The Church and its services should be interwoven with every detail of life. This is the next great step in advance, which we should all like to see taken; and a consideration of the means for that purpose will be fruitful of suggestions to us all.

Before I close my remarks, I would wish to refer to strictly Diocesan matters. Our needs are manifold, and our means for supplying them are small. I am not dissatisfied with what I have seen done, though I keenly feel how much remains to do. I have seen our Cathedral Church rendered one of the most stately and beautiful churches in the world. We hoped that the repair of that unique gem of architecture, the beautiful West Front, might have been left to another generation. It has, however, fallen upon our shoulders, and I am certain that every one who has seen the scaffolding which now mars its glories, must feel anxious for its speedy removal. I would remind them that this is only possible by the completion of the work. Again, though I have consecrated two new churches in Leicester, and one in Northampton, there is need of four more churches

in Leicester and two in Northampton, to provide for the increase of population. In the face of these material needs, it requires some boldness to mention points which might strengthen the organisation of the Diocese. I have seen the Home for Fallen Women established and working excellently, with results that more than justify the hopes with which it was founded. But I have to remind you once again that it is not yet paid for. Still it is well for us to have new schemes in view. I will practise great self-restraint, and will only mention two—a Diocesan Training Home for Deaconesses, and an Association of a few clergy who might be employed for general work in the Diocese. The advantages of organised women's work are by this time obvious. No large parish in a town can be worked satisfactorily without women's help; and an institution for the training of women, in accordance with the needs of the population amongst which they are expected to work, is necessary for a Diocese situated like this.

Similarly a band of clergy, at the disposal of the Bishop, for the purpose of giving help to parishes in emergencies, of taking charge of them during vacancies, which are sometimes inevitably long, for helping the clergy to much needed holidays, and for quickening spiritual life by courses of addresses and special services—would be productive of incalculable good. I am glad to say that I have the means of beginning such a plan upon a small scale, in the hopes that it will rapidly be extended. A gentleman, who wishes to remain anonymous, has felt that there could be no better way of helping the clergy

and promoting the efficiency of the Church's work, than by beginning such an organisation. He has offered to be responsible for the payment of a clergyman who is to be generally available for helping, in such purposes as I have mentioned, the parishes of the Archdeaconry of Leicester. The plan is very simple. The clergyman will be attached to one of the parishes of Leicester, but will be available for help in case of illness or other sudden emergency, and for taking charge of parishes during the absence of incumbents, or during vacancy. When I tell you further that I have placed the arrangement of all details of this plan in the hands of Canon Watson, to whose suggestions its exact form is largely due, I feel sure that you will all have full confidence in its careful management. I further feel that you would wish me to convey to him who has made this experiment possible your warmest thanks, not only for his generosity, but for the considerate thoughtfulness which prompted him. I know that the form of thanks which would be most acceptable to him would be the imitation of his example in other parts of the Diocese. I hope that the Archdeaconries of Northampton and Oakham will not long lag behind Leicester. The plan is not expensive, and might soon be made self-supporting; I feel that it marks a new departure from which much may follow.

And now I would commit you and your deliberations to the help of God, who is the source of all our strength and whose glory is the object of our endeavours. May He bless by His Holy Spirit all that we say, and do, and think, and direct our hearts in His ways.

THE CHURCH AND HISTORY.[1]

A SHORT paper on a large subject ought to be pointed, but in dealing with history it is only possible to be pointed by being either partisan or polemical. Events and motives were as complicated in the past as they are at the present, and do not admit of off-hand treatment. Ecclesiastical history cannot safely be studied on purely ecclesiastical lines. The history of the Church cannot at any time be severed from the history of the nation, nor can ecclesiastical questions be considered apart from the background of the national life in which they were inextricably interwoven.

The connexion of the English Church with Rome is a question which above all others cannot be dismissed by a few epigrams, nor reduced to a few simple formulæ. Even its origin cannot be assigned to an obvious cause; it was not due to the superior zeal of Roman missionaries, or the greater attractiveness of their system; it was the result of a statesmanlike admission of two principles, that it was well for England to be one in religious observances, and that it was well for England to recognise through her Church that she was a member of the commonwealth of Western Christendom. Perhaps this is as simple

[1] A paper read at the Wolverhampton Church Congress, 1887.

a general statement as can be made about the matter. The Church of England became connected with the Church of Rome, because England wisely wished to share the advantages of European civilisation, chief amongst which in early days was the ecclesiastical organisation which centred in the Roman See.

For Europe had a political ideal of its own, an ideal borrowed from the system of imperial Rome as moulded by Christianity. This ideal was a Holy Roman Empire, of which individual states were provinces, united to promote the advance of Christian civilisation. Joint heads of this great organisation were Emperor and Pope, sharing between them the care for the temporal and spiritual welfare of mankind. Do not let us smile at this ideal; for to be destitute of ideals seems to me no mark of progress, and the substitution of national selfishness for any conception of Europe as a whole, is not a gain over which we have any reason to exult. After all, it is not so very unreasonable to believe in the possibility of a European concert, presided over by the Emperor, and administering a system of international law which was to be framed by the Pope.

This system was an ideal system, and rarely approached realisation. The Emperor and the Pope did not agree about their respective parts in this arrangement; but the Papacy gradually became a more real power in Europe than was the Empire, because, not being associated with any national interests, it was more trusted, and resting only on a moral basis, it had to be more careful in securing the support of public opinion. The great advance made

by the Papacy under Gregory VII. was due to the fact that the Papacy was the only possible centre for a body of earnest reformers, who saw that the Church was being secularised, its bishops converted into royal ministers, its offices sold to the highest bidder, its clergy without discipline, and its spiritual work unrecognised, save here and there in a monastery where devout men were gathered together. To secure the Church from this condition the reformers set up the Pope as superior to Emperor and King, *i.e.*, they asserted that in the spiritual power there was something inherently superior to the temporal power.

The development of these views coincided pretty nearly with the Norman Conquest of England. Before that time the English Church had been in close friendship with the Roman Church, which she honoured as a daughter honours her mother; but the question of rights, and duties, and of legal obligation, had never been mooted. These questions arose after the Norman Conquest, partly because that event brought England into closer relation with European politics, partly because the views of the reforming party which I have just mentioned raised many points which had never been raised before. But the relations between the English Church and Rome were in a great measure those which prevailed in the whole Latin Church, save that they were not quite so close as in most countries. The attempts of the Popes to establish any special relation between themselves and England were resisted and repelled.

The influence of the Papacy on England was of many kinds, and there were many stages in the history

of the Papacy. Generally, it may be said that till the beginning of the thirteenth century the Papacy was an influence which made for good in England, and that after that period Englishmen failed to recognise that it did more good than harm. Another general remark may be made which is applicable to the whole period of England's relation with Rome—on the whole the papal influence in purely political matters was a good one. The Papacy wanted order, quiet and internal stability: it wanted to be on the side which was likely to be the strongest. To the best of its witting it endeavoured to promote peace and order in all matters where its own interests were not concerned in hindering them; and England was seldom directly concerned with the inner circle of papal politics.

On other points a few general considerations may be stated:—

(1) The connexion with Rome strengthened the position of the Church, and enabled it to be a check on the overweening growth of the royal power. William I. and Lanfranc exhibited the spectacle of Church and State uniting harmoniously together for the good of the nation. The despotism of William II. fell most heavily on the Church, and when Anselm withstood the King on behalf of righteousness, the only support on which he could rely was that of the Papacy. His sense of the degradation of Churchmen under the influence of a brutal sovereign, made him willing to accept the cry of the reforming party for the abolition of lay investitures, and in England first was framed the compromise which ended a long quarrel, by respecting the rights of Church and State alike.

From that time forward it was recognised that the Church had a sphere of her own, and that there were departments of the national life within which the power of the State could not pass.

(2) But this victory was not won for nothing, and the reference to Rome opened up the way to papal intervention in matters where the English Church did not want it. Further, this increased intercourse with Rome led to the mission of many papal legates, through whom the Pope in time claimed a visitatorial power over the whole Church. Moreover, the efforts to be rid of legates led to an appearance of withdrawal from the undoubted rights and customs of the English Church. Archbishop William, in the reign of Henry I., received from the Pope a grant of legatine jurisdiction over all the churches of Britain; on his death this was given to Henry, Bishop of Winchester, as the foremost of English ecclesiastics, but it was recovered by Archbishop Theobald. This practice had one evil result; it gave the ordinary metropolitan power an appearance of being derived from Rome, and was a step in that overthrow of the episcopal power by which the papal monarchy steadily increased its borders. In the beginning of the thirteenth century England was overrun by papal legates, till Stephen Langton, in 1221, obtained a promise that no legate should be appointed during his lifetime, and after that time the Archbishop of Canterbury was recognised as *legatus natus*, the man through whom, by virtue of his office, communications between the Papacy and the English Church were conducted.

(3) Throughout the thirteenth century the Papacy

was engaged in consolidating its power, and using it for purposes of its own which were not identical with the interests of the Church at large. What it had gained by leading a reforming party, it applied to the establishment of an absolute monarchy. Claims which had been supported by the Church for its protection from the Crown were now regarded as immemorial rights, and were used as a means of revenue. Church and State alike looked on the papal power with suspicion, which broadened into dislike; and as the nation became more consolidated under Edward I., external intervention was resented. Papal interference in politics was vigorously repelled, though the papal court was still recognised as a court of review and appeal on many matters.

(4) In the fourteenth century the Papacy had ceased to be useful to the Church and had become oppressive. It was chiefly a political power, and, as such, needed support from clerical revenues. To obtain this quietly, the Pope and the King made a tacit agreement that they would allow one another to pillage the clergy for the maintenance of their respective establishments. The papal collector was an ordinary official in England, and men saw with disgust the revenues of the English Church being carried away for the enrichment of a Pope who was a supporter of France, the national foe of England. So the Statute of Provisors was directed against his interference with the rights of patrons, and the Statute of Præmunire was similarly framed to check his jurisdiction. These statutes were practically failures, for in an ordinary way the King had no interest in enforcing them;

they only put him in a better condition for making a bargain with the Pope. The nation had not much sympathy with clerical grievances as such: so long as King and Pope only harassed the clergy, no one felt very indignant. The result of this was that the clergy were equally afraid of the Pope and of the King, and felt themselves entirely helpless. The machinery of the National Church was broken down by the Papacy in the interests of its monarchical power. The Episcopal power was traversed by exempt monasteries, which were the strongholds of papal advocates; the Episcopal jurisdiction was thrown out of gear by the prevalence of appeals to Rome. Discipline was more and more difficult to enforce; the government of the Church became more and more chaotic. The Church, in fact, split up into a number of wealthy corporations, drifting farther and farther away from the main current of the national life.

(5) It was the consciousness of this fact that awakened a desire for reform amongst earnest men throughout Europe. Reform has always been necessary in all human institutions, and the Church had oftentimes been reformed, by the Papacy, by monastic revivals, by the movement at once intellectual and democratic of the Mendicant Orders. But each of these instruments of reform had assumed permanent forms within the Church, and had perpetuated themselves as necessary parts of its organisation. The Church, in fact, was overlain by the survivals of its reforming agencies, which had become in turn its most obvious abuses. For the Church was everywhere overgrown; monasteries had long since done their

work, and their inmates had become at the best genial country gentlemen ; the number of clergy was excessive, and the sight of men living in idleness was not edifying to men who had to labour hard for their livelihood ; clerical wealth was disproportionately large, as much work, which in earlier times had been done by the Church perforce, because there was no one else to do it, was slowly passing to secular organisations. These were things which were manifest to every thinking man ; how were they to be readjusted ? The old plan of a reforming order was hopeless, as there were too many orders already. The organisation of the National Church was powerless ; it had been broken down by the Pope, till it was entirely controlled by the King. The general discontent expressed by Wyclif and the Lollards did not contain any promise of a constructive system. The reforming Councils of the fifteenth century only showed that the divergence of national interests made conciliar action impossible. On every side it appeared that reform was possible only through the Papacy, and the dread of revolution led men to cling desperately to it, and admit the most exaggerated forms of its claims. Archbishop Chicheley quailed before Martin V. as no English Archbishop ever quailed before Martin's predecessors ; with tears in his eyes he besought Parliament to repeal its anti-papal statutes ; he submitted to the Pope's claim to act as supreme-ordinary over all others. Even the State raised no vigorous protest against the appointment of the Bishop of Winchester as cardinal and legate.

(6) So the Papacy reaped the full advantages of a submission engendered by despair or indifference,

and unsuspectingly enjoyed its triumph. When the thunderbolt fell, it fell from a clear sky. Never had the position of the Papacy been theoretically more secure; never had the Papacy fewer open foes than when Luther raised his protest. Never had English King been on more friendly relations with the Holy See than was Henry VIII. Never had the connexion between England and Rome been so little complained against, or raised fewer difficulties, or seemed more powerless for good or ill than just before its severance. The papal power had ceased to be either dangerous or aggressive; it was simply obstructive. As the nation became consolidated under the Tudors, the papal jurisdiction had gradually dwindled, till matrimonial cases were almost the only ones in which it was invoked. Papal legates were not likely to interfere in England against the will of the English King; nay Henry VIII. had compelled a reluctant Pope to confer on Wolsey the cardinalate and the legatine authority, that thereby the trusted servant of the Crown might have a freer hand over the English Church. The point on which Henry VIII. quarrelled with the Pope was one in which the King was morally wrong; the means which he used to compel the English clergy to bend to his will were absolutely iniquitous. The charge on which papal authority was overthrown in England was that it did not dare, much as it might wish, to be blindly subservient to the royal will. That was the occasion of its fall; but the cause was that no one in England trusted or respected it. Never was an immemorial connexion, which had done much in the past, which was theoretically of vital importance,

severed with less difficulty, or did its severance provoke less resistance. Very few Englishmen at the time wished to maintain the connexion with Rome. Some wished to restore it later on, when they shrank from the social and religious changes which followed on its fall. The preamble of the Statute of Appeals stated the belief of well-nigh every Englishman when it said that England was an empire, and the nation a complete body within itself, having full power to do justice in all cases, spiritual as well as temporal. Englishmen had learnt that the connexion with Rome was only a hindrance in the way of working out a solution of national problems. The Papacy could not or would not work the reforms which men had long desired, and prevented the Church from attempting them for itself. The result was that the reforms were left for the State to work, and were wrought by rude hands and in rough ways; men murmured but on the whole acquiesced. When the relation with Rome was re-established under Mary, it already wore a foreign look, and after that brief experience Englishmen never wished to hear of it again. The Papacy has changed much since then, and Romanism has developed as much as Anglicanism; but Romanism still seems something foreign and exotic on English soil, and is alien from the aims and from the modes of thought of the average Englishman. This sense of strangeness, this resentment of an intrusive authority, was not the result of the sixteenth century. It dated from much earlier times, and then only found its expression.

INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION UPON ENGLAND, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE WORK AND WRITINGS OF JOHN WYCLIF.[1]

ALL great movements which affect the organisation of society are of slow growth, and are complex in their nature. It is difficult always to keep this truth in mind. There is a tendency to investigate one cause to the exclusion of others. There is a tendency to regard only the immediate steps which produced a change, or to criticise only the immediate results which that change produced. I propose to regard the Reformation in England under three aspects: political, moral and intellectual; and to consider the larger and more permanent causes and results.

(1) Politically, the Reformation expressed the dissatisfaction of the national spirit with the papal government of the Church. The Middle Ages tell a continuous tale of opposition to papal interference. In England, earlier than in any other country, a national spirit was developed. The end of the thirteenth century saw England united under a truly national system of government. The Pope was not allowed to exercise any influence on English affairs. Clergy and laity alike saw with growing discontent

[1] Paper read at the Carlisle Church Congress, 1884.

the drain of English money to the Roman Court. So far as the Reformation declared that the affairs of the English Church could be managed within the realm, it only expressed a long prevailing sentiment of the English people.

(2) Morally, the organisation of the Mediæval Church had become unwieldy. Institutions once useful had survived the period of their usefulness. Monasticism fostered an indolent class. There were too many clergy, and many of them acted unworthily of their calling. Ecclesiastical discipline had become a vexatious means of exacting money. Ecclesiastical disputes were common, and appeals to Rome were encouraged. A process in the papal court was costly and was endless. Diocesan and provincial jurisdictions were almost destroyed by the system of appeals. The encroachments of Rome had thrown into confusion the old machinery of the Church. Thoughtful men had long seen the dangers of this disorganisation, and the need of reform; but national or provincial synods were powerless without the Pope. Even Europe, united in the reforming Councils of the fifteenth century, failed to discover a practicable scheme for reform. Nothing could be done save through the Papacy, and the Papacy became more and more secular in its aims, more and more immersed in Italian politics. Meanwhile the feeling of nationality grew apace. In England the rise of a prosperous middle class created a practical spirit which wished to see the Church made more useful to the people. The associations of the past ceased to outweigh the needs of the present. The clergy

were bidden to feel that they were made for the people, not the people for them. The moral aspect of the Reformation was a desire for a simpler Church system, more intimately connected with the aspirations of national life.

(3) Intellectually, the Reformation movement was helped by an increased knowledge of the world, of literature and of the language of the Scriptures. Men were not satisfied with being told that doctrines or ceremonies were the traditions of the Church; they asked for the grounds of these traditions; they demanded proof of their agreement with the words of the Church's Divine Founder.

These three tendencies were each of them of long growth. No one of them necessarily involved the overthrow of the papal headship, or any breach in the outward unity of the Church; but when they all came together, they created a mass of opposition to the existing system, which ended in a series of revolts.

The importance of Wyclif in religious history lies in the fact that in him these three tendencies first converged, and were embodied in his career. At first he was an ecclesiastical politician, who employed his learning in finding arguments for combating the papal claims to interfere in the affairs of the English Church. Next he laboured at the restoration of preaching and a revival of religious life. The more he increased in spiritual earnestness, the more he felt that the spiritual interests of men were sacrificed to an overgrown ecclesiastical system. He asserted that the Church was the congregation of faithful people, and that the papal primacy ought to be

exercised solely for the purpose of ministering to their needs. His noble translation of the Bible put into the hands of Englishmen the whole Scripture. "Our great charter," he calls it, "written and given to us by God, on which alone we can found our claims to His kingdom." Then, in the interests, as he thought, of theological learning, Wyclif went on to attack the current form in which the doctrine of the Sacrament of the Altar was expressed. He invoked "grammar, logic, natural science and the sense of the Gospel," against a definition which stated that the words of the priest at consecration wrought a change in the actual substance of the bread and wine. He did not deny, nay, he condemned those who denied, the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Christ's body, he said, was sacramentally and spiritually, but still actually, present in every part of the Host, as the soul was present in the human body. Wyclif did not seek to overthrow the current belief in the nature of the Sacrament; he only demanded that the philosophical definition of its operation should be less material and more spiritual. He thought that the language in ordinary use was unscientific and led to a low view of the Sacrament itself, and to an undue exaltation of the person of the priest.

Thus, politically, Wyclif asserted the freedom of England from papal interference; morally, he strove to adapt the ecclesiastical system to the needs of the people; intellectually, he demanded that doctrines should be defined in accordance with "logic, natural science and the sense of the Gospel". Wyclif strove

to gain these ends within the existing framework of the Church; but this was not to be. The Papacy refused to move in the direction of reform till it was startled by the revolt of half of Western Christendom. It then became less powerful for political interference in the countries which remained in its obedience. It reformed the more glaring abuses in its ecclesiastical system, and developed a strong organisation for defensive and offensive purposes. Intellectually, it made little change in its traditions.

The question of the influence of the Reformation on England can only be answered by considering what England gained and lost by abandoning the papal headship. This is only possible by comparing the chief features of the English Church, not with an idealised Church of the Middle Ages, but with the Roman Church as it has been in operation since the Council of Trent. I wish to be as impartial as inherent prejudice will allow an English Churchman to be. You will pardon me if my language sounds cold as I briefly indicate a few considerations of the results of the three causes which I have traced.

(1) Politically, the Reformation largely developed the national spirit of England, through the need of antagonism to the Papacy, and to the Pope's adherents. First, the war with Spain, which was a direct result of the Reformation, directed England into the career of colonisation, to which her present greatness is due. Next, the breach between England and her chief neighbours on the Continent produced a feeling of isolation, which forced Englishmen to think and act for themselves. The national spirit of England

became more resolute, adventurous, and practical. Englishmen were driven to face actual facts, and deal with them promptly and sensibly. It was this training which enabled England to overcome her competitors for the mastery of the New World; but she would not have overcome them permanently unless she had also shown a greater civilising power, which means greater honesty, greater straightforwardness, greater love of justice. National morality, it must be remembered, can only be judged by comparison. I cannot say that before the Reformation England's policy showed a greater care for righteousness than did that of its neighbours; but since the Reformation, there have been many conspicuous instances in which England has shown a more exalted standard of national morality, than can as yet be said to prevail universally. England has gained by the Reformation in the more sterling qualities of national life. On the other hand, it must be admitted that Europe as a whole lost somewhat by the breach of its religious unity. Its aims became narrower, more self-interested, less concerned with matters of European policy as a whole. As regards England itself, increased strength of national character was won by a sacrifice of larger interests. The Reformation intensified England's tendency to isolation. It deepened, if it did not create, the less attractive features of the English character—a narrowness of sympathy, an inability to recognise problems which lie outside the sphere of immediate practice, and a disregard of logical principles of national action. This was in a great measure England's loss from the Reformation.

(2) I turn to the ecclesiastical system of England as it was affected by the Reformation. First, as regards the mechanism for the self-government of the Church, the Reformation did not go far enough. The papal headship was abolished, and the temporal privileges of that headship were transferred to the Crown. Nothing was done to re-establish the organisation of the Church as a self-governing community in spiritual matters. It must be noted that the loss of its old mechanism was the result of a long course of papal aggression. The English Church inherited confusion, and the time of the Reformation was not propitious for amending that confusion. The royal supremacy took the place of the papal supremacy; but the Church as a spiritual community gained no greater liberty of action. As a consequence of this, the English Church has shown too great a tendency to Erastianism. Its discipline is defective; it lacks a logical or settled system of jurisdiction. This must be admitted; but again an impartial comparison with other countries suggests some compensation. The English Church has been in close relation with the national life. Its demands may not have been so precise as those of the Roman Church, but its pervading influence has been greater. It has had no exact theory of the relations between Church and State; but the exact theory of Rome has never been successful in practice. A theory may be very imposing; but when it is whittled away by separate concordats, which are being constantly eluded, it ceases to command much respect. The English Church may still repair its system in the future; but I doubt

whether it has much to learn from the success of the system of the Church of Rome.

As regards the relations of the Church to the people, it must be admitted that the changes made at the time of the Reformation were too exclusively made in the interests of the prosperous middle class. The old services were adjusted to their intelligence, were made simpler and more practical. Moreover, the exigencies of a time of change demanded one intelligible and uniform mode of worship. Everything combined to make the new system narrower and smaller than the old one. It contained fewer elements which appealed to higher and lower minds; it aimed more exclusively at the average man; it had little outlying region of mysticism in which finer souls might wander at will; it did not enthrall the unintelligent by appeals to their feelings; it disregarded the teaching of the eye; it aimed at practical edification, at an orderly, but comprehensive organisation of religious society. I pass by the question how far the Anglican Church did the utmost or the best that the times allowed. She certainly achieved one great object, which marks her as distinct from other deviations from the old system. She preserved intact the institution of the Church and of the Sacraments as they were in the Apostolic Age. By doing so she retained the possibility of a strong organic life. On the other hand, she lost some of the more imaginative elements of religious feeling; she adopted a form of worship which was simple, but somewhat inflexible, and became too exclusively connected with the aspirations and desires of the active and influential classes

in English society. Hence, in a time of spiritual awakening, she could find no room for John Wesley, and was so well satisfied with her own work of edification that she looked coldly on the work of evangelisation. In another time of spiritual awakening she lost the allegiance of many fine minds, which missed in her the definite assertion of the principles of ecclesiastical life.

Admitting these defects, let us again turn to comparison with the history of the Church of Rome. The Church of England has not, at all events until recent times, produced the same number of individuals who have scaled the higher regions of the spiritual life. She has not in the past succeeded in laying so firm a hold upon the masses. But she has undoubtedly succeeded in carrying Christianity into the principles which direct the life and conduct of the community, in a larger degree than prevails in any other country. Her directness, her demand for a sense of individual responsibility, her full offer to all of the means of grace—these things have tended to keep strong in Englishmen that which is the chief element of the religious life, a sense of sin. The more elaborate system of the Roman Church has not been so successful in this point in those countries where it has worked unimpeded. This consideration seems to me to be a very weighty one; for the sense of sin is the most powerful bulwark against the temptations of unbelief. On their capacity for quickening and keeping alive this sense of sin, the future of all religious organisations will more and more closely depend. The strength of the Church of England lies in the

fact that she has created and maintained a high average of practical Christianity. The national difficulties, which in the sixteenth century impressed somewhat limited aims upon her, have now passed away. Made wise by experience she has the promise of a great future. Without any change in her constitution, she has made her future more definite, has found room for higher aspirations, has shown that she can influence the masses, has developed great missionary activity, has spread her influence in every quarter of the globe. Only in later years has she begun to reap the full harvest of the Reformation.

(3) Intellectually, I see no losses to be set against the gain of a frank acceptance of Holy Scripture as the sole basis of doctrine and Church government, and a recognition that the sense of the Gospel has to be determined by strict adherence to "logic, grammar and natural science". The modest claim of the Anglican Church to be "a witness and keeper of Holy Writ" has been fully maintained. The greater pretension of the Roman Church to inherent powers of authoritative interpretation, has not proved so effective a barrier against unbelief. An extensive frontier affords weak places for attack. The process of slow retreat from untenable positions is hard to accomplish. The imposing appearance of strength vanishes on closer inspection. English theology has shown a capacity for facing the actual questions which perplex men's minds. It has been strong in its readiness to accept the historic method, and in its desire to obtain scientific results; it has done this in a careful and sober spirit which has made it powerful to mediate

between conflicting opinions. The English Church has been especially successful in retaining the allegiance and directing the thought of vigorous minds.

To sum up these fragmentary remarks. The teaching and the personality of Wyclif expressed and foreshadowed the great characteristics of the English Reformation. The influence of the Reformation in England was strong in directing our national history and moulding our national character. The reformed Church of England has kept alive the spirit of personal religion in a way which contrasts favourably with other religious organisations. Her defects are not irremediable, and she has shown a capacity to remedy them. In the region of thought she has held the strongest position, for she has elected to stand by the strength of her great central fort, the power of the Scriptures as the word of God, and the historical truth of the facts which they relate.

THE NATIONAL CHURCH: ITS CONTINUITY IN ORDER, DOCTRINE AND AUTONOMY.[1]

I MUST confess to considerable uncertainty about the exact meaning of the branch of this subject which has been assigned to me; but as I stand in place between Canon Jessopp and Professor Gwatkin, I propose to occupy, in time, the period which lies between their two papers. In so doing, I can only make a few remarks upon a few salient points in a simple way.

You have already heard how the Church of Christ came into England from various quarters, with an organisation already formed. At first there were slight differences of local usage in points of administration and of worship; but with growing intercourse with the continent, these were abandoned for the sake of harmony. Then the unity of the Church led the way to a unity of the nation, in which Church and State were one. This simple condition of early times was altered by the Norman Conquest, which brought into England more highly developed ideas, and consequently more highly organised mechanism. No great outward changes were made, but things were looked at from a different point of view, and were interpreted differently. They were put into order; they were read

[1] A paper read at the Church Congress, Norwich, October, 1895.

into the terms of a system. A more developed organism implies differentiation of functions. So Church and State had their separate spheres assigned them for the first time. Civil business was separated from ecclesiastical business, civil courts from ecclesiastical courts, and common law from canon law. But the King was over all; and William the Conqueror made answer to Pope Gregory VII., "I will not do homage to you, because I do not find that my predecessors did so to your predecessors". Nothing was done to diminish the rights of the English State or of the English Church; nay, they, like everything else, were only made more definite and precise.

The general result of these changes was that the Crown was stronger than it had been before. William the Conqueror used his power wisely; but William Rufus discovered what a powerful engine his father had devised, and the land groaned under his oppression. He treated clerical fiefs as lay fiefs, and kept the See of Canterbury vacant for years. Believing himself to be at the point of death, he tried to make amends by appointing Anselm. He recovered from his illness, and tried to rid himself of an upright Archbishop, created by mistake. I need not tell you how he wore out Anselm's patience, till Anselm pleaded that he was ready to answer for his doings as Archbishop, "as he ought, and where he ought". The barons supported him in withstanding royal tyranny; they refused to support him in carrying his appeal to Rome. They said that it was contrary to the customs of the realm which he had sworn to observe.

Now this attitude of the barons is undoubtedly

marked by that inconsequence which plays so large a part in human affairs, especially in England. They wished Anselm to oppose the royal tyranny, and for that purpose to grasp any weapon which he could find ready to hand. But some weapons were only to be brandished, not to be used ; and such was the threat of foreign intervention. Anselm might use it to prevent the King from oppressing him ; but he and the King alike were bound to maintain the customs of the realm, and settle their disputes by reference to them alone. You will admit that this was an attitude very characteristic of the English mind ; and it is remarkable how soon the atmosphere of their island home exercised its influence on the Norman intelligence. However, Anselm was a newcomer, and was not satisfied with this inconclusive result. He made his way to Rome, and laid his case before the Pope.

If we consider Anselm's motive, it may perhaps be stated thus. He turned from the oppression of power founded upon force, to power founded upon an idea of the nature of justice. The legal development of feudalism tended to materialise rights and duties. This tendency was to be counteracted by an ideal extension of feudalism into an all-embracing system, embodied in the theory of the Empire and the Papacy. Christendom was held to be a great confederation, united under two co-equal heads, who regulated affairs by applying those great principles of right and wrong which were sometimes obscured in a smaller sphere This was an ideal conception which was never realised. Emperor and Pope were seldom in accord, and generally were at war. The Empire declined, and the

Papacy increased in esteem. So far as the mediæval ideal ever became actual, it was embodied in the Papacy. But I think that in mediæval times, men were much more concerned to have an ideal than they were interested to realise it. They rejoiced in the possession of principles, but they were chary in applying them. Their principles were, after all, legal and technical, to be perpetually discussed—not ideas which had an inherent power of conviction and led to immediate action. They must have a good case, and they did not care how far they went to find arguments and precedents to support it; but meanwhile they were ready to maintain their cause by the means which were most easily available.

Another striking point in mediæval conceptions is the mode in which men strove for liberty. They did not assert it as a right of the individual, which, indeed, it is not; nor did they strive directly to adjust society so that it could find room for as much individual freedom as was possible; but they tried to free themselves from the burden of excessive demands by setting one claimant against another. No position had such great possibilities as one of divided allegiance; and every one tried to construct for himself such a position. A remote suzerain with indefinite claims, and little power of enforcing them, was invaluable as an escape from local authority. By dexterously setting one against the other, you could secure a good deal of your own way, while professing absolute obedience.

If these tendencies be kept in view, it is easy to see the attraction of the papal supremacy as a theory, and the practical advantages to be gained by the admission

of the papal jurisdiction. In England, certainly the theory was strictly limited by a consideration of practical advantages. Late in the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis mocks at papal pretensions; the man who at Rome could not make good his rights, even over a garden, is assuming to dictate to kingdoms. Early in the thirteenth century, Adam Marsh saw, in the record that Peter cast himself into the sea to go to Jesus, while the others went in their own ships, a proof that the successors of Peter had the government, not only of one ship, but of the whole ocean; and adds, "The sea is the whole world; the ships are the churches". If we seek an explanation of the difference in these views, it is to be found in the fact that the Papacy had rendered great service to England in the troubled times of King John, and had helped to restore order during the minority of Henry III. The theory of a far-off suzerain had been put into practice, and had been found advantageous.

It remained to be seen how long the advantage would endure. Alas, if the beginning of the reign of Henry III. saw the papal power both useful and popular in England, the middle of the reign saw it harmful and detested. It was the old story of the benevolent protector. "From the root of a protectorship upsprings a tyrant," was a discovery of the political experience of ancient Greece, and that experience is constantly repeated. The protector demands an exorbitant price for his protection, and sets to work to destroy in his own interests, the institutions which he was called in to defend. England soon took the alarm and began to prescribe limits to papal activity.

Exception was taken to the presence of legates; and it was agreed that the Archbishop of Canterbury should be regarded as the ordinary legate through whom papal communications were to pass. Already in 1226, a nuncio had to answer complaints in Parliament about the corruption of the Roman Curia, and the Pope confessed that much scandal and infamy was deserved. But he pleaded that this came from his poverty; if he were decently rich he could afford to be upright. Let me quote the letter of Pope Honorius III.: "For the entire rooting out of this scandal, we have provided a form, to which, if you are willing to consent, you can free your mother from scandal, and obtain justice in the Roman Court without need of gifts". The modest proposal contained in the accompanying form was, that two prebends in each cathedral and conventual church should be granted to the Pope. It is not surprising that when the letter was read in Parliament, "each man made merry with his neighbour over the greed of the Romans"; and the King answered, "This concerns the whole of Christendom. When we, who live in the ends of the earth, see how other nations behave towards such exactions, we will discuss the matter."

I have taken an early instance; but soon our records are full of complaints about papal meddling and Roman avarice. I do not wish to weary you with details. It is with no satisfaction that we follow the steps in the degradation of a great ideal. It is enough to say, that its practical benefit was soon exhausted, and it remained as a burden. The most melancholy lumber in the world is the ruins of agencies

that were established for the purpose of reform. Men are ashamed to get rid of them, because they were set up with such fervent hopes, that their failure is only grudgingly admitted. However, the practical result ensued that the Church, which had sought protection against royal tyranny in the Pope, was soon driven to seek protection against papal tyranny in the King, by whose side stood Parliament with increasing power of representing the nation. By legislative enactment the papal claims to patronage and taxation were refused, and the introduction of the decisions of papal courts into England was forbidden.

Again, I need not follow out this process in detail. It is enough to say that the Church had to make the best of it between its two protectors, the King and the Pope, and suffered at times equally from both. When the interests of the two were at one, they combined to pillage the Church. A strong King was independent and resisted the Papacy; a weak King made terms with it, and allowed it to advance. The Pope made overweening claims on paper, which the King did not trouble to deny, because he knew that they could be exercised no farther than he chose to permit. The King passed Acts of Parliament which he did not mean to enforce farther than suited his own convenience; but the royal armoury was stocked with weapons which Henry VIII. used with surprising effect. Meanwhile, the Church certainly suffered; its machinery was thrown out of order; its revenues were used as rewards for services rendered now to the Pope, now to the King. But during all this time the nation was slowly advancing in self-consciousness;

and it was the formation of national sentiment which was ultimately fatal to the papal claims. I have shown you that the beginning of the reign of Henry III. was the time when the papal power in England was at its height. The reign of Henry III. was the period in which, largely owing to resentment at papal interference, the cry was raised of "England for the English," a cry which found its final expression in the preamble of the Act forbidding Appeals to Rome. "Whereas by divers sundry old authentic histories and chronicles, it is manifestly declared and expressed that this realm of England is an Empire governed by one supreme head and King."

This, however, is wandering into the next subject, when my own is too big already; but it leads me to a point which has to be noticed. It may be said that I have been treating the Church as a National Church, whereas the conception of a National Church was not found out in the Middle Ages. I can only answer that, somehow or other, the Church in England was always understood to serve the people in England; and just as the people who lived in England became the English nation, so did the Church in England become the English Church. When the framers of the Great Charter enacted "Libera sit ecclesia Anglicana," they had a notion that their own ecclesiastical institutions were the object of their special care, and formed part of the common life of that community in which they were specially interested. Again, I say we must go beyond theory to fact. Theoretically, Europe was regarded as forming one great Christian commonwealth; practically, every

ruler pursued his individual interests. There was steadily going on a process by which people who lived together and passed through common experiences, were combined by a consciousness of common interests. This was the process by which nations were formed; and England from its insular position was the first to reach this national consciousness. The Church, so far as it was the organ of the nation, passed through the same process. It was part of Western Christendom, just as England was part of Europe. So far as its institutions were part of a universal order, they were unalterable; so far as they concerned the relations of England to foreign countries, they were determined by national needs. About these matters Churchmen were not allowed to have their own way. The strongest instance of this is given by the events of the year 1428, when Archbishop Chichele was so pestered by Pope Martin V. to abolish the statutes which prevented the Pope from disposing of benefices in England, that he and the Archbishop of York pleaded the Pope's cause before the Commons. With tears in his eyes, the Archbishop urged the danger of withstanding the Pope. The Commons were not moved by his pathetic eloquence. They only sent a petition to the Council representing, that the Pope had acted to the prejudice of the Archbishop, and of "our aller mother, the Church of Canterbury". They had their mother Church at home, and not even its Archbishop should induce them to diminish its independence, which was likewise their own.

I have tried to show you that the Church in England had its own history, and passed through its own

process of development. Some people talk sometimes as if it came into being as a branch of the Roman Church; or as if at some period of its history it was merged in the Roman Church. It had varying relations with the Roman Church, which were regulated, not by the claims of Rome, but by the advantage to be gained by England. I cannot put what seems to me to be the historical truth more clearly than in this form; the Church in England, while retaining its own continuity in all essentials, admitted the papal jurisdiction on grounds of utility, and then passed through a long period in which it discovered that that jurisdiction was dangerous to Church and nation alike.

THE ABOLITION OF THE ROMAN JURISDICTION.[1]

THE question of the causes which led to the abolition of the Roman Jurisdiction in England, is a subject which deserves careful attention on its own ground. It is generally regarded as an incident in a great movement which is called the Reformation, and is accounted for by reference to general tendencies. It is, however, well to deal with the facts round which those tendencies gathered. It is well to investigate what actually happened, before venturing on large explanations of great movements. Yet, as regards that movement which is of chief importance to us, the breach in the unity of the Church which took place in the sixteenth century, three large explanations almost universally prevail, and are freely used to interpret what actually took place. To its foes it was merely an outburst of lawlessness; to some of its friends, it was an assertion of free-thought; to others, it was a revival of a theology which had been long suppressed. All these may be true in their degree; I am not concerned to discuss them. But the question still remains, What actually took place? What were the immediate causes which led to revolt or secession? After all, there was as much lawlessness

[1] A paper read at Sion College to the Church Historical Society, 1895.

in the fifteenth century as in the sixteenth; there was as much freedom of thought actually practised; there was as much room for theological divergence. What were the points on which the existing system was challenged, and on which it refused to give way? A system which claims to be universal must be flexible, and must have a power of adaptation. It must be judged at a crisis by its refusal to explain, or to change. We are content to judge Charles I., not by reference to the beneficent or maleficent action of royalty generally, or in England in particular; or by tall talk about the advantages of liberty; or by the mistakes and misdoings of his opponents when they were in power; but by considering his own conception of the royal power, and the means and objects for which he exercised it. We pass our judgment by reference to our answer to the question, If this had gone on, unchecked, where should we have been now?

I should like to see the same sort of consideration applied to the events of the sixteenth century. Charles failed, and his opponents failed; and out of their combined failure, after a time of deadness, something more tolerable emerged. And so we can criticise, with reasonable equanimity, what was good, and what was bad, in all concerned. But in the larger sphere of ecclesiastical history, neither the Papacy, nor its opponents, entirely succeeded, or entirely failed. We still live in the same atmosphere of conflict, and are still beset by the same prejudices. We still discuss trifles as though they were of the utmost importance. Proof or disproof seems almost impossible. Con-

troversy goes the same weary round; and no falsehoods ever seem to be exploded. The only way of escape is to put technical questions in their true relation to events. As legal points they may be argued interminably by skilful pleaders, but they were not raised as abstract points, and the verdict at the time was given on the merits of the case as a whole.

As a matter of fact, the movement of Luther in Germany took its rise in the question of Indulgences. The penitential system of the Church had become so complicated that no one understood it: its actual operation was by many thought to be both unspiritual and immoral. Luther asked that it should be discussed. He was told that this was impossible. When he persisted, he was threatened with imprisonment, or worse. Germany resented this treatment, and we know what followed.

In England events followed a similar course, except that the question was raised by the King on personal, and in some degree on national, grounds. The question raised was that of Papal Dispensations. I think we have allowed this fact to be forgotten. Our moral sense is outraged by many of the details of the actual case. We judge them from our own point of view of to-day. On the mere facts, taken by themselves, we see in Henry VIII.'s action the wilfulness of a man determined to have his own way, where his passions were concerned. We feel sympathy for a Pope who was endeavouring to uphold the moral law. But these sentiments do not really touch the point. How came it that Henry VIII. should ever have enter-

tained the idea of a divorce? Why did the English people, as a body, agree with him in his action? Why was such a simple matter the cause of so much discussion? A moment's thought will show us that it is not Henry VIII.'s action which is on its trial, but the state of things which made that action possible. This is the subject which requires investigation; and I cannot find that the material for investigating it has been brought together. I can only put before you a few scattered notes on the condition of the Church at that time, as shown in this matter of dispensations.

The origin of a dispensation is simple. It was an exception, made in a particular case, to the general operation of a law by the judge who was empowered to enforce the law. From the point of view of the law, which was in its nature intended to be of universal operation, it was regarded by canonists as a wound which it must perforce endure: or again, from the point of view of the lawgiver, as a casting overboard of costly wares to save the ship from destruction. From the point of view of the recipient of the dispensation, it was a recognition that the law did not apply to his case, because, if applied, it would either cause some ill, or prevent something better. The accepted definition of a dispensation runs: "A dispensation is the determination of a superior, declaring that the general law is not to be observed in some particular case. Nor is the dispensation a declaration only, but it is a relaxation of the law."

Though I wish to keep to my subject as closely as possible, it is obvious that the question must arise of the nature of the legal system to which dispensations

were applied. It is enough to say that, from the sixth century onwards, the Church undertook to regulate human action by a system of disciplinary enactments, the breach of which involved a penalty. It is an open question if such a system was necessary to cope with the violence of the times, and to reduce the strong passions of the barbarians into something like order. But this must be observed, that at first discipline of this kind was exercised by the bishops, aided it might be by the civil power. In the ninth and tenth centuries this early system, which had reference to local usages and to local needs, which was administered with a view to them, and therefore did not need any special dispensing power, as the facts of the case were before the judge in giving his decisions—this early system in conformity with Germanic customs, was replaced by a centralised system of regulations which came from Rome. It is not my business to consider how this change was wrought; but we may see the beginning of it in the questions which Augustin asked of Pope Gregory I. about points of order to be observed in England. Pope Gregory's answer passed into that great storehouse of good advice, which is called the Canon Law. This accumulation of good advice was ingeniously constructed into a legal system, and was administered as such. This is the most important fact in the history of the mediæval Church.

It is, however, tolerably obvious that such a stupendous system could only be loosely administered. It is also obvious that it must be in itself very flexible, and must be subject to constant change. Boniface VIII.

admitted: "It is always necessary to frame new laws, because human nature is steadfastly inclined to introduce into life new relationships". If everything in human life was to be brought within the sphere of enactment, those enactments must be numerous. Further, if the enactments were to claim obedience, their claim must be capable of ready adaptation to particular cases. So the conception of a dispensation was—not that it was advice about the best way of observing the spirit of the rule; that would have destroyed the idea of law—but that it was an authoritative relaxation of the law, which so was left in possession of its universal claim.

The more we consider this point, the more clearly, I think, do we see the difficulties in the way of putting rules for conduct on the same basis as positive law. Law is concerned with man's relations to his fellowmen, and enforces the principles of social order. Punishment is involved in every breach of law, partly to redress the wrong done to another, partly to uphold the law. But in the case of rules made for a man's own good, he is himself the sufferer if he breaks them; and the punishment is inflicted for his own good, to hinder him from breaking them again. Such punishment cannot be codified and measured out: it must be in its nature relative; it must be decided with reference to all the facts of the case, *i.e.*, it must be applied to the individual. But if so, the system ceases to be a universal system, and cannot claim the name of law.

Now this seems to me to be the dilemma in which ecclesiastical discipline was rapidly placed. If it was

only good advice, it would be comparatively ineffective: if it was reduced to a system, and applied universally, it would operate so unjustly that it would cease to be obeyed. The attempt, however, was made to erect it into a system with two large back-doors of escape—Indulgences and Dispensations. Indulgences provided an escape from the penitential discipline, which rapidly became impossible: Dispensations provided for everything else.

There is another point which is worthy of notice. If the Church was to have a legal system, it must have a definite head, who was in a sense the source and protector of the law. It was round this legal system that the papal jurisdiction grew up. It was the necessities of the legal system which changed the whole organisation of the Church. If ecclesiastical regulations were to be held as laws, and administered as such, their administration must be uniform; in other words, the episcopal jurisdiction must be reduced to a shadow, and the papal jurisdiction substituted in its stead. There was a difficulty, so long as ecclesiastical law depended on decrees of Councils, either general or provincial. Such decrees obviously issued from the Church itself, either universal or local; and the duty of impressing them on people's minds was with the bishops. But when papal constitutions and decretals were introduced as interpreting or explaining, it was easy for lawyers to complete the system by drawing it all under the papal authority. Thus Innocent III. wrote: "Though others have a share in the cares of governing the Church, yet, as the Pope is endowed with the fullness of power, and as he gives

authority to the canons, he is not injuring the law when he dispenses from it"; or again, he says: "Secundum plenitudinem potestatis de jure possumus supra jus dispensare". The theory prevailed that the papal authority protected all canons and decrees, and so made them positive law. It followed that if the Pope withdrew his protection, these canons sank back to their original position as good advice, and so might be neglected, if the Pope approved, in any particular case. It further followed, that Diocesan bishops could only dispense from Diocesan statutes. Provincial Councils had a general sanction, and anything that was general belonged to the papal jurisdiction only. Thus the episcopal relation to the laws of the Church, was practically abolished by the growth of the legal system itself. In the case of penitential discipline it was more difficult to get rid of the bishops: this had to be done by a new institution of Jubilee Indulgences, depending solely on the Pope, which gradually overrode all other indulgences by their superior privileges.

But there was further a question, What was the ground on which a dispensation could be granted? Originally, it was given in the interest of the individual who received it, that he might receive equitable treatment where the law, through its general application, would have operated unjustly in his case. But it is obvious that these equitable considerations could not be weighed by a remote and central authority. The object of that authority was to protect the law on the whole, by providing an escape from it when it was likely to be endangered by over-strictness. This

conception runs through the language which is used by canonists on this point. Dispensations were practically accommodations. What then regulated these accommodations? The answer was, the advantage of the Church. We know how easy it became to identify the good of the Church with the good of its earthly head. Dispensations were therefore granted avowedly to promote the interests of the Papacy; and all conception of equity towards the individual concerned rapidly disappeared. The interest of the lawgiver was the only thing which was considered. The conception of ecclesiastical law remained in the popular mind as something useful to enact, and profitable to dispense from.

Of course there were limits to the dispensing power, but they were inconsiderable. The Pope might dispense from all the laws of the Church, but not from the law of God. "Some precepts," says Ivo of Chartres, "are immovable, *viz.*, those which the eternal law has established, whose observance is necessary to salvation. Others are movable, such as were not established by eternal law, but were discovered by the diligence of our fathers for useful reasons; not to gain, but to secure salvation." From the first class there was no dispensation. But this class was sorely diminished by the subtilty of canonists. Thus there is a gloss which lays down "quod Papa potest contra Apostolum dispensare," which I suppose means that the Pope ranks as a permanent Apostle, and can revise the decisions of his predecessors, not in matters of faith, but in their practical applications of the faith. Similarly it is laid down "dispensat in Evangelio

interpretando ipsum," where the application of evangelical precepts to particular cases is left to the Pope's determination. Thus, for practical purposes, there was no limit recognised to the dispensing power.

There is this noticeable point about this part of the papal authority, that it was rarely, if ever, seriously attacked as being an abuse. This arises from the fact that it did not weigh hardly on any classes of the community. Dispensations, after all, were luxuries for which a man might fairly be expected to pay. But further, no one could attack dispensations without criticising the entire basis of ecclesiastical law; and this was so closely interwoven with social life that nothing short of a revolution could detach it. We must remember that the whole feeling of the Middle Ages was in favour of law in the abstract. Men wished to have things clear on paper, though their solicitude did not extend to actual practice. They had a strong sense of rights to make up for a very imperfect sense of duties. The more laws there were, the easier they were to evade. Rigid regulations, with plenty of loopholes for evasion, seemed to them to protect society on the one hand, and give a scope for individual freedom on the other. The assertion of freedom in itself was dangerous; it was enough that any one could get it in particular matters with a little trouble. No one wished to simplify the law; dispensations got rid of it when necessary. So dispensations in themselves were popular. Even St. Bernard in his *De Consideratione*, only aims at making them rest on equitable grounds. He draws a line between "dispensare" and "dissipare". If they make for the general good of

the Church, they are laudable: if they do not, they are the marks of a spendthrift, not of a faithful steward. Even the reforming council of Basle recognised the necessity of the use of equity, and declared that it did not derogate from the papal power of granting dispensations when they were useful or necessary.

I need scarcely stop to point out the effect which the system of dispensations had upon the legislation of the Church, upon the growth of the papal power, and upon actual discipline. It will be enough to note its general influence: (1) Legislation was not hampered by the fear that enactments would have to be carried out. It became increasingly ideal, with diminishing relation to actual facts. The ingenuity of canonists was unfettered by any thought of the consequences of their conclusions, as it was comparatively easy to escape those consequences if desirable. It is of little practical purpose to study the Canon Law and point to its precepts as the law of the Church, binding for all times, if not revoked. As practically applied, it was an ideal system, with little relation to life. It was a triumph of logical ingenuity which every one regarded as admirable. Men in the Middle Ages loved law, and could not have too much of it—on paper. Our ideas have changed in modern times, and we dislike to live under regulations which are not observed by the community. We must carry our present attitude into the past, and translate its codes into terms of our existing ideas, before we can attempt to apply them.

(2) The papal power strengthened its foundations, as it seemed to decline in political importance. It rested on two great pillars, Jubilee Indulgences, which

brought each individual soul into direct need of the Pope's aid, as only his Indulgence could reduce the amount of satisfaction due for sin to limits within which it could possibly be paid; and Dispensations, which made it possible for men to seem to keep the law of the Church, without really doing so. It was the persistent extension of this system of accommodation, which seemed to have no limits, that gave a moral force to the protests of the sixteenth century.

(3) The dispensing power upheld the political influence of the Papacy, when its actual authority was weakened by national resistance. It maintained a body of officials who throve by its extension, and were a hopeless impediment to reform. The papal monarchy degenerated into a bureaucracy. The more regulations were made for discipline, the more room there was for dispensation; so that reform only opened the doors for fresh abuses. There was drawn a vicious circle from which there was no escape.

If we ask what were the matters in which dispensations were mostly required, the answer is, release from vows, relaxations of rules about ordination and the tenure of benefices, and especially release from impediments to matrimony. There were conspicuous cases of the use of all these just before the Reformation. I will only mention a few instances. Cesare Borgia was released from his orders, laid down his cardinalate, and became a military chief. Pope Leo X. was created cardinal at the age of fourteen. Pope Clement VII. was illegitimate, and therefore excluded by the canons from the priesthood. The tenure of benefices in plurality was universal. Wolsey held at the same

time the sees of York, Durham, Winchester and Tournai, besides the abbey of St. Albans.

These matters only affected the clergy; but matrimony affected the laity. The impediments to matrimony grew in a marvellous way. Blood-relationship was carried to four degrees of consanguinity—at one time to seven, but this was found intolerable. Affinity was regarded as an equal bar. Sponsorship was a spiritual relationship. Marriage itself was "a formless contract," in which an agreement *per verba de praesenti*, overrode any subsequent union. The confusion was endless. These restrictions had their origin in a useful sentiment, but they were extended by perverse ingenuity, till the marriage law has been truly called "a maze of flighty fancies and misapplied logic". And I fear it must be admitted that this process was acquiesced in because it opened a door for divorce. If you will remember my formula for the legal aspect of the Middle Ages, you will see how this is a conspicuous instance of its application. Marriage was a sacrament; matrimony was indissoluble. But a good many people wished to dissolve it; and a means for this purpose was discovered by fencing round matrimony with so many protections that it was really doubtful if any one were lawfully married or not. Then, if a couple wished to be securely married, their only course was to apply for a dispensation from all impediments. If not, some impediment could almost always be found to prove that the marriage was null and void *ab initio*.

I do not think that the practical working of this system in the fifteenth century has ever been investi-

gated. The records are obscure, and the subject is not attractive or edifying. But it is, perhaps, worth while to bring together a few facts bearing on the marriages of Henry VIII.'s near relatives. They will serve to show the political importance which the power of dispensation gave to the Pope ; and also the very precarious basis on which that importance rested. European politics had entered on a phase in which the rising sentiment of nationality was embodied in dynasties. Royal marriages were matters of the utmost importance, and carried with them the political fortunes of provinces or nations. If the Pope undertook to issue dispensations in such matters, he was certainly not concerned primarily with the laws of the Church, or with the equitable considerations which might be urged by individuals, but with national interests. It would seem that all he had to be assured of was the political expediency of the transaction. But there was sure to come a time when the question would be raised, *Whose* political expediency is to be consulted? that of the nation, or that of the Pope? When these were set in opposition, when the Pope used his dispensing power as a political partisan, there would be serious difficulties.

Let us look a little closer at the papal action in this matter. Henry VIII.'s father, Henry of Richmond, married Elizabeth of York at his accession. As they were related in the fourth degree, a dispensation was necessary. In granting it, Pope Innocent VIII. interposed most usefully in English affairs. His bull set forth that Henry VII. was king by hereditary right, by victory in the field, and by parliamentary

decision ; his marriage with Elizabeth was in accordance with every one's wish, and avoided farther bloodshed ; but the crown of England would belong to Henry and his descendants by another wife, in case Elizabeth died without issue ; any one who spoke or acted contrary to this incurred the severest penalties of the Church. This was a very far-reaching use made of a dispensation.

Let us now look simply at cases in Henry VIII.'s own family. One of his sisters, Mary, married Louis XII. of France. The first wife of Louis was Jeanne of France ; the marriage had needed a dispensation as the parties were related in the fourth degree, and further, the father of the bride had been godfather to the husband. But, when Louis came to the throne, it was desirable, on political grounds, that he should secure to France the province of Brittany, the heiress to which had married his predecessor. Pope Alexander VI. agreed that Louis should bring a case before a tribunal of bishops nominated for the purpose, who, on evidence supplied by Louis himself, declared the marriage null. Thereupon, Louis married Anne of Brittany, the widow of his former wife's brother. On Anne's death he married Mary of England, but died soon after. Thereupon, Mary married Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. Let us see what were Brandon's matrimonial proceedings. He had married first, with a dispensation, a lady to whom he was related in the second and third degrees of affinity. After a time he pleaded that the dispensation was not valid, as he had previously contracted marriage with another lady, who was related to his wife in the

second and third degrees of consanguinity, and further, his grandmother was sister to the father of a former husband of his wife. On these grounds his marriage was declared null, and he took the lady to whom he had first contracted. Mary Tudor was his third wife.

Henry VIII. had another sister, Margaret, who married James IV. of Scotland under a dispensation, as they were related in the fourth degree. On his death she married the Earl of Angus, but grew weary of him, and applied for a divorce, which was granted in March, 1527. Wolsey wrote to her denouncing the divorce, "The shameless sentence sent from Rome discovereth how unlawfully it was handled"—judgment being given against a party neither present in person nor by proxy. It is worth while noticing that this "shameless sentence" was given just before Wolsey took in hand Henry VIII.'s case. Surely he had some precedent to justify his action.

All this is exceedingly tedious and most unedifying. But no one has ever yet taken the trouble to consider the condition of domestic morality amongst persons of importance, which resulted from the system of dispensations. Yet without a knowledge of this, a fair estimate of the reasons which led to the abolition of the papal jurisdiction in England is impossible. To take Henry VIII.'s divorce on its own merits, and judge it either by our own standard or by the standard of what is supposed to be ecclesiastical law, is not fair. The question is not, What was the law? but, How was the law administered? If Henry's pleadings are discreditable, the blame must fall on the court whose

procedure in the past had rendered such pleadings possible. As a matter of fact the Curia had so behaved that anything was possible. Henry's plea of the absence of a male heir to the kingdom was a strong one, if political expediency was to have any weight. As to the legal grounds on which the decision could be given, any expert canonist could discover some flaw in the dispensation by which Henry had married Catharine. That dispensation itself was regarded as scandalous when it was given; and Ferdinand the Catholic consoled Henry at the time of his marriage, by telling him that the King of Portugal had married two sisters and had a healthy family. An interesting document drawn up in 1527 by Campeggio for the Pope's guidance, states briefly the legal aspect of Henry VIII.'s case. If, when the matrimony was contracted, all the impediments were expressed, and the dispensation was sufficient, the matrimony is valid and cannot be dissolved. If the impediments were not fully expressed, and the dispensation was not sufficient, there was no matrimony, but only concubinage. In this case, the Pope can give a new and sufficient dispensation if both parties wish; but without new consent on both sides, the Pope cannot validate the previous marriage, which indeed was no marriage. It is tolerably clear that, on such an opinion, a case of endless length might be opened. As a matter of fact, Henry's pleadings followed the course here indicated. Campeggio truly remarked that the cause was arduous both on account of the persons involved, and the length of time to which it went back. But he did not regard the case

as presenting any abnormal features in itself. He was quite of opinion that all depended on the nature of the dispensation. He did not foresee the possibility of the argument advancing to the consideration of the right to grant such a dispensation at all. The question was really a political question; and the growing hostility between Charles V. and Henry was fought out round it. Pope Clement VII. sat trembling between the two, and ultimately chose the lesser evil. Henry and England were far away from Rome; but the power of Spain was supreme in Italy. Clement waited to see if it was likely to be overthrown; when he saw that there was no immediate probability, he declared against Henry. It was the knowledge of all this that weighed with the English people. The Papacy had allowed matrimony to be annulled from motives of convenience till the principle itself was generally accepted. But when it appeared that the convenience to be considered was not that of the nation, nor that of its King, but merely the convenience of the Pope, England in a dim sort of way felt that this was an impossible conclusion. If dirty work had to be done, the dirty work of the English King deserved doing as much as any one's.

Wherever one looks at the actual working of the papal authority in the fifteenth century, the same result appears. The system was so full of abuses that reform seemed impossible. The centralisation of ecclesiastical authority in one office had led to the multiplication of officials who lived on fees, and were prepared to do anything that was needed. The theologians all extolled the plenitude of the papal power,

and provided formulæ for all that was necessary. The vast extension of the ecclesiastical laws, in their attempts to cover the whole of human life, had created a system too burdensome to be borne. That system was retained in an appearance of stately grandeur by a subterranean labyrinth of subterfuges. What had been established for the promotion of morality provided means for the utmost immorality. It was impossible to find a way out of the confusion in which good and bad, right and wrong, were inextricably confounded. What had really occurred was this. The Church, in its desire to represent God on earth, had undertaken the impossible task of reconciling, here and now, God's justice and God's mercy. Its laws represented justice; but that justice was felt to be of overwhelming severity. So mercy was called to its aid, and an attempt was made to apply it in mitigation. Justice may be administered by many judges, for they are the servants of the law. Mercy can only be granted by one who is superior to the law. It was this which more than anything else contributed to the growth of the papal power, and led men to acquiesce in papal pretentions. They wished for mercy, and thought that the Pope, if he was only made powerful enough, could dispense from the irksome bondage of the law. At last a point was reached when mercy, formally distributed, destroyed the law altogether; and men learned to look to the Church, not as the guardian of the Gospel, but as the power which could reduce its precepts within the limits of mechanical compliance. It was not accidental, but inevitable, that the revolt in Germany

arose concerning the most conspicuous of these abuses —Indulgences. It was not a mere personal question, but it was the exhibition of a judicial system in all its ineptitude, which led English common sense to abolish it.

THE IDEA OF A NATIONAL CHURCH.[1]

In the remarks which I shall make, I shall confine myself to an attempt to show what is meant by a National Church. Objection is taken to the conception in itself on the ground that it is opposed to the great idea of a Catholic, or Universal Church, which it was our Lord's object to found. I will briefly state some considerations bearing on this point.

The Church of Christ is one, in the same way as mankind is one. As God is the Father of all men, so Jesus is the universal Head of the human race. His Church is the body of those who recognise Him as such. It exists by union with Him; it can have no object of its own apart from Him; its work is to bear witness of Him, and its power to do so comes from the indwelling of His Holy Spirit. Its unity is one of common faith, common hope and common love.

Mankind is one because it is God's family: but it cannot recognise this fact, and the corruption of human nature is manifest in perpetual discord. The Church of Christ is one in a much more intimate sense, because it has a knowledge of its unity, and of its obligation to set forth that unity in the world. Why is it also divided into differing and hostile bodies? The answer is, that though the Church is

[1] A paper read at the Shrewsbury Church Congress, 1896.

a new creation and belongs by right to the spiritual order, its home on earth is in the natural order, by which it is constantly limited, and from which it cannot be completely disentangled. The Church of Christ, in spite of variances, is the greatest bond of union which exists. It has created an attitude towards life, the power of which can only be understood by comparing Christian and non-Christian peoples. Why is it not a greater bond? My answer will be that the conditions of human life have ruled that, to accomplish its work, the Church must admit differences of organisation. This admission, however, has never been made. Men in the past failed to recognise any unity that was not structural; and though the course of the world's history has declared against this conception, it is still not abandoned. Human frailty, unable to realise the spiritual order save in the forms of earthly polity, has passionately striven to retain an ideal of the Church which has become obsolete, and has sacrificed unity, which is possible, to uniformity, which is impossible. In support of this I must ask you briefly to consider historical facts.

The Church grew up within the political framework of the Roman Empire; but the immediate result of the spread of Christianity was to revive national sentiment. Differences of thought and character, which were in abeyance under the Roman rule, began to show themselves again in the modes in which Christianity was apprehended and applied. The framework of the Roman Empire remained long enough for the settlement of Christian dogma, *i.e.*, of the intellectual meaning of Christian truth, on one universal basis.

Then the great system of the world's government fell in its outward form; but the Christian Church survived, supplying a bond of connection between the new peoples, and impressing upon them all that was best worth preserving of the spirit of the old civilisation. It could not, however, maintain unity of organisation. The declining Roman Empire found it necessary to have two capitals, Byzantium and Rome, corresponding to the different tendencies of its Eastern and Western subjects. The difference became more strongly marked, and in the ninth century led to a separation between the Eastern and Western Churches—a separation not arising from any real difference about the contents of the Christian faith, or its application to life, but arising from differences of language, modes of thought, and conceptions of the nature of civil authority. The State continued to exist in the East, when it had fallen in the West. The Church went with it, and continued to present the faith in the old forms with which the Eastern peoples were familiar. In the West where the old State had disappeared, the Church stepped into its place, and maintained the appearance of a religious commonwealth, whose civil affairs were administered by local rulers. It organised itself on the lines of the Roman Empire, and adapted its system to meet the needs of the various peoples whom it undertook to govern. It set up the papal monarchy, and a theory of development in theology, both of which were rejected as unlawful innovations by the settled and conservative East. The consequent separation destroyed the idea of one Church,

united in outward organisation. There was still one Church, united essentially in one faith, and setting it forth in the world ; but it differed about the mode of government and the method of teaching.

However, each part claimed for itself universal acceptance and condemned the other. The Western Church, by treating the Eastern with contemptuous indifference or open hostility, maintained its exclusive hold on the West. It thus held the peoples of Europe together under a common discipline, which enabled common conceptions to tell upon the formation of national institutions and national character. But when national character arrived at self-consciousness, there was a renewal of the process which had occurred in earlier times. The organisation of the Western Church could no longer contain both the Latin and Teutonic peoples ; there was again a breach of outward unity, which mainly followed the lines of national development.

Now our judgment of all this process must depend on our conception of nations and of national institutions. To me it seems that the differentiation of nations is part of that continuous revelation of God's purposes which is contained in history. Creation shows us endless diversity. God bestows on mankind "diversities of gifts, but the same spirit". The people of modern Europe entered upon a common inheritance of religion and of civilisation. They appropriated this, and added their own spirit, in varying degrees, till the European Commonwealth existed only in idea, and was replaced in fact by a number of independent states, each exhibiting national

characteristics of its own. Behind these characteristics lay different conceptions of liberty, *i.e.*, of the meaning and contents of the individual life; and these conceptions were embodied in different institutions.

What was there in this, it will be asked, which was inconsistent with the maintenance of a uniform organisation of the Western Church? The answer is that that organisation had itself been affected by the process going on around it, had ceased to be mainly ecclesiastical, and had become almost entirely political. The Roman Church was a name which meant, generally, the ecclesiastical system of Western Europe, and, particularly, the political interests of a small Italian principality. It was no longer a Church, but a State; it no longer promoted the general interests of Europe, but sought its own interests; its process of development, which at first found room for the manifold tendencies of the peoples whom it governed, was arrested when it had gone far enough to perfect a rigid form of absolute government. The cause of the German revolt is simple. Germany was challenged to say if it would yield absolute obedience to a distant authority, and send Luther prisoner to Rome, contrary to its own sense of right, of liberty, and of national responsibility.

In England a smaller question led to a more quiet adjustment, and the jurisdiction of the Pope was set aside without any organic change in the Church. The English position is set forth in the language of the Statute of Appeals. "That part of the body politic called the spiritualty, now being usually called the English Church, has always been reputed and found of that sort that both for knowledge, integrity

and sufficiency of number, it has been always thought and is at this hour sufficient and meet of itself, without the intermeddling of any exterior person or persons, to declare and determine all such doubts and to administer all such offices and duties as to their realm spiritual doth appertain." The root idea of the National Church in England is simply this, that England can manage its own ecclesiastical affairs without interference from outside, because experience had shown that that interference was a hindrance and not a help. This involved no new principle of ecclesiastical administration: bishops and provincial synods remained as before.

I am not concerned with pressing further the historical results that followed. I have shown you how the idea of a National Church came into existence. What does it involve?

(1) It is in no way repugnant to the conception of one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Its local name signifies that it consists of members of that Church living in a particular country. All members of the Church are one through faith in God as revealed in the Scriptures; and that faith is expressed in the Creeds of Christendom.

(2) These local bodies of believers have no power to change the Creeds of the Universal Church, or its early organisation. But they have the right to determine the best methods of setting forth to the people the contents of the Christian faith. They may regulate rites, ceremonies, usages, observances and discipline for that purpose, according to their own wisdom and experience of the needs of the people.

This, I think, is all that a National Church implies, and its principles simply recognise the facts of human history. It is grievous to think of all the havoc that has been wrought by a refusal to recognise those facts. The unity of the Western Church has been destroyed by the assertion that a monarchical constitution is of Divine appointment, *i.e.*, by resolving the Church into a State, and fighting for it as such. The question of the organisation of the Church has been confounded with the faith of the Church; and Christianity has been used as a means of suppressing national feeling and stifling liberty. Instead of being the Divine educator of mankind in the regions of truth, the Church has too often appeared as busied only with upholding its own organisation, without reference to the purpose for which that organisation exists. Theology has suffered, because, instead of explaining positive truth, it has been largely concerned with unprofitable negations. Religious bodies have claimed universality for every detail of their own organisation, and have despised others. Thus the idea of a National Church has not been allowed to express itself fully, or to develop peacefully. England only has maintained it in the West; and in England the influence of outward antagonisms has not allowed the Church to embrace the whole nation, and has in former times obscured its relations to the State. There is much to regret in the history of the English Church. But it is worth while to notice, that the Roman Church has failed more conspicuously, and has committed worse errors. It has been regarded as the enemy of national development, and has been

hopelessly worsted in every country of its obedience. If its organisation has been strong enough to prevent the growth of sects, its overweening demands have directly promoted religious indifference. It has not, as a matter of fact, succeeded anywhere in obtaining the authority which it claims.

If I have become controversial, it is the fault of my subject. The idea of a National Church can only be judged by comparison with its alternative. The idea of a Church, universal in its organisation, has been tried, and, as a matter of fact, has failed, because it could not make room for two forces which have been most powerful in shaping the modern world—the forces of nationality and liberty. These forces have their defects, like all else, and need discipline from that spiritual truth which it is the duty of the Church to teach. The modern State is largely the product of those two forces; and there is ample material in the actual condition of Europe to determine what system has been most successful in training nations to a sense of Christian duty. A Church which claims universal obedience, uses force when it can command it, and intrigue when it cannot. It takes up a lofty position of superiority to the State, and asserts an independence which it does not in fact possess. Its claims read well on paper; it makes beautiful provision for a good time which never comes. A National Church can put forward no such far-reaching pretensions, nor issue such peremptory commands, which are attractive in the eyes of bystanders who covet power—and who does not?—until they perceive that those commands are rarely obeyed. A National

Church stands in close relation to the life of a particular nation, and tries to lead it to a recognition of its eternal destiny, not to force it into a common mould. It persuades rather than commands; its weapon is influence, not power. In pursuing this course the Church of England has to endure much from human wilfulness—but not more than the Church of Rome. It is only deprived of the privilege of sulking, which it knows to be useless. This privilege, however, seems to have an attraction to some, who when they do not immediately get their own way exclaim, "Better disestablishment than this," as if in any change of organisation it was quite certain that their particular opinions would prevail. But the English Church has the satisfaction of knowing that it is training the generations on whom the future of the world depends, and it is content to gender sons and daughters into freedom. It knows both the difficulties and the responsibilities of its task, and is willing, nay anxious, to learn from every side. It longs for peace with other Christian communities; and tries to rise above misunderstandings which come from ancient warfare. The sense of the greatness of the work which lies before it, is teaching it to separate what is trivial from what is fundamental. It has never committed itself to hasty statements in judging others which have erected impenetrable barriers. Its sympathies are growing, and with them its power of creating sympathy in others. It pleads in the Christian world for that charity which is the bond of unity, and it works in hope of repairing breaches and restoring ancient ways.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, LONDON DIOCESAN CONFERENCE, MAY, 1897.[1]

I HAVE to thank you very warmly for the kind welcome which you have given me on my first appearance among you. I can assure you that it is natural that a new bishop who has only been at work for three months should feel decidedly shy on addressing his first Diocesan Conference; and especially in a Diocese like this, where with the very best intentions it is hard to come into touch rapidly with all the various organisations which exist, or even to obtain a sure grasp upon those tendencies which are most powerfully at work. My chief duty at present is, I feel, one of quiet observation. But I must withdraw that epithet and substitute another for it, it is one of unquiet observation; for quietness is not an attribute which is possible for a Bishop of London. I can only assure you that I try to think, when I have a few minutes to spare for that purpose; and that what time is over from answering questions in the course of the day, I try to devote to asking questions for my own information; but I feel that the time I have had at my disposal for this purpose is so small that I am still steeped in entire ignorance, and not being by nature or training a

[1] This address was given extempore, and is printed from the report of the Conference.

believer in government by means of happy thoughts, I prefer not to construct policies, nor to give utterance to my intentions, until I have had ample means of studying the details of various questions. However, one thing at least I should like to say, which is, that in nothing whatever am I wedded to my own ways of doing anything, and that my one desire is that the course which is pursued may be at once the largest, the wisest and the best. I am very glad to meet you all to-day, but I feel that on this occasion my proper place should be that of a listener, rather than that of a speaker. I am still to many of you a stranger who needs an introduction, and I can only hope that as my acquaintance increases, my tongue will be untied, but not unduly untied, for I think that the duty of a president is to preside and to encourage as far as possible free expression of opinion on the part of others, rather than forestall it by remarks of his own. I would, therefore, prefer to make very few remarks at the opening of this Conference. It would be difficult to make a survey of the questions that have been of the greatest importance to the Church during the past months; but there are two which must occur to every one as being of primary importance and significance. Those two are the passing of the Voluntary Schools Act, and the distinct adoption by the Church of the Clergy Sustentation Fund.

Now with regard to the first subject, perhaps I may make one or two remarks upon the importance of that measure generally, with a view of showing how we stand on this all-important question. The importance I think of the Act that has been passed is

this, that it is a distinct legislative recognition of voluntary schools and their position. Of course at first, when the Act of 1870 was passed, it was not considered necessary to recognise voluntary schools, because all that was to be done was to be done as a supplement to the activity which they had already displayed; but like many other things that are done with very good intentions, it turned out that this produced results exactly opposite to those which were supposed possible. I mean that the very fact that no mention was made of voluntary schools, because they existed and were doing good work, has in process of time been quoted against them; and we have lately been suffering from the very strange misrepresentation of being considered somehow or other as cumberers of the ground, as obstructives to a general system of national education, and as being needless excrescences standing in the way, and being distinctly where we are not wanted. We winced greatly under that perfectly unjustifiable charge, and I think that the great importance of this present Bill is that it puts all the talk founded upon that supposition, once for all, into the waste paper basket, and dismisses it. For it is perfectly obvious that behind this Bill there stood the great weight of popular acquiescence and desire. There were two things which the public mind very greatly wished to have expressed; first of all its satisfaction that voluntary schools should exist, because they provided schools of a somewhat different type from the Board schools. The public mind was convinced that it was desirable to have different kinds of schools, and that their co-operation

and their action upon one another was distinctly desirable for public purposes. And I think that a second view prevailed strongly in the public mind, namely, that the maintenance of the voluntary schools provided the sole guarantee for religious instruction. It is very easy, indeed, in all legislative and administrative matters to get ourselves into a position where we really do not know what is best and wisest to do for the purpose of expressing our genuine opinions, and getting them genuinely attended to. Now it seems to me that that has been the position in which the British public has, in a mysterious manner, found itself in the matter of education, and it is very desirous indeed to get out of it, and to see some clear line on which it can express its desire decidedly and emphatically for the maintenance of religious education, and its belief that religion must lie at the bottom of all true systems of education. I believe that that opinion prevails almost universally in England among all classes, and yet the public mind finds great difficulty in expressing that opinion in a definite and tangible shape; and this difficulty arises from the fact that we have constructed an education problem which has been concerned with every possible topic but education. The education question which has been before us for so many years has concerned itself with the best modes of providing schools, and the best way of getting the money for providing those schools. It has even gone into details about hat-pegs, and it has concerned itself with everything that has to do with the outside of education, and with nothing that has to do with the inside of it. And the consequence is that we have heard more than

enough of the rights of ratepayers and citizens and parents, but we have heard nothing hitherto in all this controversy of the rights of the children, who seem to me to be the class which ought to be primarily considered.

Now the settlement of our educational difficulties will come just in proportion as we set the children before ourselves as the class who are really concerned, and as we wave the other classes to one side. Surely, as we look at the children themselves, and as we consider the facts of a child's life and the laws which regulate a child's mind, we must feel, and everybody must feel, that many of our questions and discussions and many of our problems are really somewhat wide of the mark. For what is it that a child has a right to claim, and what is it that we all of us wish to give him? The child has a right to claim of any generation, that he shall be supplied with the best knowledge that that generation possesses; and this surely is what we all of us want to give the child. Take a step farther, and let us ask ourselves what is therefore the first necessary thing with which the child should be supplied. That child has to live his own life. How is he to live it? What is the best and most absolutely necessary piece of information which ought to be given to him? Surely it is that there is such a thing as a noble life, and that there are means of making such a life his own. If you do not teach a child that, I do not see that you teach him anything; you have not begun at the right end; but if you have accepted that, you are led at once to the fact that religion must be the basis of education. How are you

to teach a child what a noble life is, and how a noble life is to be led, without at once going not only into the outlines of religion, and not simply into certain aspects of it, but into religion as it is applied affirmatively to his own character—religion as it has to exercise its influence upon his own life? Therefore, I am of opinion that the way by which we shall get rid of many of our old controversies, and emerge into a larger and serener atmosphere is by having a more widely spread interest in education as such. It is untrue to represent the advocates of voluntary schools as being opposed to educational efficiency. It is for educational efficiency that they are fighting; and they maintain, and they are bound to maintain, that you cannot get that educational efficiency by waiving upon one side, and putting into a secondary place that which must, under any intelligent system of education whatever, be the primary and most important object to be pursued.

The advantages to be expected from the passing of this Act are, of course, first of all a certain amount of financial relief. That is not much in itself, save so far as it gives time for other considerations and removes the immediate pressure under which our schools are labouring, and therefore gives us the opportunity which I trust we shall use wisely, heartily and well for the promotion of educational efficiency in our schools in every way. But the important part in this Act is the establishment of associations. That brings before us a consideration which I think, now that we look at it, we must confess that we are culpable for having so long neglected. I cannot but think that

there is something to be said by those who have twitted us, as I have been twitted, when I have been advocating the claims of voluntary schools, and asked: "Why have you been so stupid as you have been? Why have you not federated yourselves? Why have you not followed the example of the School Board? Why have you not had a Church Board of your own over a large area, which could keep its schools in line, through having a policy of its own, and which could have shown the public that you were struggling for educational efficiency as such?" It is quite true that we ought to have done this voluntarily, we ought to have done it years ago of our own accord, and one of the obstacles which continually stands in the way of such action on our part, is, I regret to say, the intensity of the parochial spirit. It is a very good thing that "charity should begin at home," but it is a very bad thing that it should end there. And it is very good that our activity should begin in our parishes, but very bad that it should end there, and that we should have no view of a larger area, and should so inadequately feel the necessity of co-operating for the general purposes of the Church at large.

Now the associations primarily formed only in order to advise the Department about the means proposed to be adopted for the distribution of the financial help, will, I hope, be the beginning of a real federation of schools throughout the whole Diocese. I hope that our association will become a Church School Board, divided properly into areas for administrative purposes, with local committees, and I hope it will have the result of bringing the schools very much into line. I hope

also that the growth of this body will be upon large lines of representation, and that the result of its activity will be in all cases to eliminate eccentricities in management. I admit that the cases of eccentricity have been few, but unfortunately there have been some; and every case in which a well-meaning manager makes a mistake, or does anything that is capable of being misrepresented, is nowadays routed out with remorseless ingenuity and is perverted and made the most of in every possible way. Of course we ought only to rejoice that we live in an age of such complete criticism. I can assure you that nobody feels the advantage of this more than does the Bishop of London. The amount of good advice upon every possible subject which he receives every morning is something for which he cannot be too grateful, or too publicly express his gratitude.

The religious question, however, about our schools is not yet settled. I look, as I have said, for the settlement of it to come from the prevalence of a larger view and a higher conception of education in itself, which I think we may hope will be raised afresh upon a new field.

We always talk about "questions," and a question of course supposes that it admits of an answer. But so far as I know about human affairs, very few questions, indeed, ever receive a definite answer. They are not answered at all, but they simply die out or are superseded by other questions, or they solve themselves by being raised to a higher point. As regards the religious difficulty, I sincerely hope that that question will solve itself by being raised to a higher

point. No progress is made upon the old lines, but it is possible to make progress when a new aspect of the question opens itself out. You must be aware that there is a new question about education now imminent—I mean the whole question of Secondary Education—and I can conceive that from the discussion of Secondary Education, some wiser administrative methods and some larger principles may emerge than have as yet displayed themselves about Elementary Education. It is, of course, always hazardous to attempt to forecast the future; but I certainly conceive that the question of Secondary Education should call into being a central educational authority on which there shall be a proper representation of educational experts. I certainly think that our educational system needs such a council. Then I can imagine that under this central council there should be local authorities. I am certain that we shall make no progress in education unless we have local educational authorities. I do not mean an authority chosen to erect schools and deal with bricks and mortar, but an authority to deal with education as such, the members of which should be chosen largely on the ground of their educational interest and educational experience.

Then would come the matter of the delimitation of Primary and Secondary Education. Many have assured me in speaking on this subject that the matter is entirely uncontentious, and may be discussed and settled without any real difference of political opinion. I sincerely hope that it may be so, but I am bound to say that I think that the delimitation of Primary and Secondary Schools is likely to create as much difference

of opinion as any question which has ever been submitted to the public. It is almost impossible to undertake it, even in its outlines, without seeming in some form or another to lay hands upon that one part of our institutions which we seem to be agreed, it is sacrilegious to touch, I mean the School Boards. Every other of our local institutions may be held responsible to a larger authority; they may be regarded as being committees either of the borough councils or of county councils; but it seems to be a primary axiom of our local and even of our national politics, that no man is to regulate a School Board; that no man is for a moment to suppose that a School Board can submit to any possible restraint. Well then, if we have our School Boards so glorified and placed in such an exceptional position, it is very difficult, indeed, to suggest any limitation of their possible functions which is not likely to create a good deal of difference of opinion. But I can conceive it possible that the differentiation between Primary and Secondary Education should be made upon the basis of their functions; that Primary Education, for instance, should be taken to consist of the existing standards, together with apprenticeship schools for the distinct purpose of giving Technical Education to those who are going to pursue a trade at the age of fourteen; and that all else should be regarded as Secondary Education, the ground of the distinction being that Secondary Education aims at fitting for a professional career, and not simply for the life of an artisan. Around the discussion of these matters, I live in hopes that some wiser educational policy may gradually come into

view, a policy which may react upon the present position of our Primary Education, and by reacting upon it, may free us from some of the difficulties in which we at present stand, difficulties which I have said I believe have come upon us simply and solely because we have substituted other matters for the main and absorbing interest in the real nature of education itself, and its efficiency for the children for whom it is desired.

I must apologise for having occupied so much of your time in talking about this abstract question which is not immediately before us. The Clergy Sustentation Fund is before us, and it is to my mind a very hopeful sign of the activity and energy of the Church as a whole, that this Clergy Sustentation Fund has been set on foot by the very great activity and energy of a body of laymen ; it was judged well from the beginning that this matter should be left in the hands of laymen. I have not, in my experience, come across any committee or any body which has displayed more energy, more activity and more zeal than has the Central Council of the Clergy Sustentation Fund ; they have been instant in season and out of season ; they have urged the claims of their society upon every one ; they have striven to give it as large a basis as possible, and to make it meet, as far as they can, the local requirements of every part of England. There can be no doubt whatever of the necessity of this movement. The time has come when it is necessary, in some humble form, to re-endow a great many of the country benefices, and also some of those in the towns. The one thing that

is absolutely necessary for the success of this attempt is that it should be supported universally, that no Diocese should say that it is in such an exceptional position, that it has no relation to this Central Fund. I admit that the Diocese of London is quite exceptional, but I hope that this exceptional position will not make it stand aloof, and that the result of our deliberations will be to consider practically in what shape it is wisest and best for us to take part in this general movement, and in what way we can most cordially show our sympathy with it.

This general conception of the solidarity of the Church is one that I have very strongly in my mind; there is nothing that I more earnestly desire than to bring together all members of the Church; I am bound to say that I cannot speak in a melancholy way of what we sometimes call "our unhappy divisions". I must tell you frankly that I rejoice in the breadth and width of the Church of England as it is; I recognise the enormous advantages which every different school of thought contributes towards the general spread of those eternal principles of truth in which we are all interested. It is quite clear, in such a country as this in which we live, amongst the social, political and intellectual conditions under which our lot is cast—it is quite clear that no one set of opinions, no one form of Divine service, no one particular way of presenting religious ideas, will universally prevail. It is impossible to think that the English people will be dragooned into absolute uniformity about everything; they will have differences of opinion about the forms of their services as about

everything else, and I think it my duty, as bishop of this Diocese, to show my sympathy with all forms of service and all forms of religious zeal, which are loyally in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. These differences of opinion are healthy and inevitable, and though we may differ slightly upon some points—as it is desirable we should—we can all work together for the great purpose of evangelising mankind, and of making known the truth to all classes of society—to those whose lot has been cast and whose character has been formed in different circumstances, and in circumstances which must continue to differ. Having this object before us, I think that we may work harmoniously and zealously for all good purposes, and I am glad to see that so many reports are to be put before us which have for their object that of uniting the various organisations, preventing the overlapping of different societies, and consolidating them all under one system, that so, in the largest possible spirit, we may work for the objects which we all have at heart.

I began with some personal remarks; let me conclude with a few more. I venture to think that there is existing among the clergy at all times some slight confusion of thought as to what are the functions of a bishop. Let me at once tell you, that, so far as I understand the matter, the duty of a bishop is governance; and no amount of extraneous activity can make up for the absence of administrative zeal and pains and patience. I have to do my best to administer the actual business of this Diocese; I wish that it were only the business of this Diocese that I had to ad-

minister; there is a great deal more that belongs to the Church at large that inevitably falls upon the shoulders of the Bishop of London; but judging from the letters that I receive from the clergy, they seem to think that the duty of a bishop is first of all to preside at all meetings, parochial, ruri-decanal and otherwise, not only about all business concerning the separate parishes and rural deaneries, but about every organisation and Church society as well. They seem to think that it is also his duty to preach at least once every year in every Church in his Diocese, at the harvest festivals, dedication festivals, and every other possible festival. I have no doubt that such festivals are of great value and of great interest to the parish itself, but I am afraid that it is absolutely impossible for the Bishop of London to be present at them all, or indeed at any of them; because, if he begins to make a selection, he naturally puts himself into an invidious position. Therefore, I say, that I do not propose to preach any harvest festival sermons, any dedication festival sermons, or to take the chair at meetings of ruri-decanal or parochial organisations of Church societies. It must be my duty to further Diocesan societies by all possible means in my power; but when I was an undergraduate, I luckily was taught formal logic, and I there learned the following important syllogism: "All men are mortal, the Duke of Wellington is a man, therefore the Duke of Wellington is mortal". What applies to the Duke of Wellington applies to the Bishop of London; and he can only work within the limits of frail humanity. I am so old-fashioned that I do think it is necessary you

should think before you speak; I also think that it is necessary that you should not go on repeating such ideas as already have come into your head, but that you should have some time in your life for co-ordinating them, and for forming new ideas. Since I have been Bishop of London, I have been conscious of increasing mental deterioration. I have had no time to read a book; I have really not had time even to think. I say this because I have to spend so much of my time in saying that I cannot do things I am asked to do. It is not the desire that is wanting, but the power, and I simply use this opportunity to ask the clergy to be a little more considerate in the demands they make upon a bishop's time and energies.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, LONDON DIOCESAN CONFERENCE, 1899.

AN annual meeting of any kind suggests inevitable changes. We look round for faces which are no longer with us. There is one whose loss we all unite in deploring. George Spottiswoode was so long connected with all good work in this Diocese that he stood in close personal relation to almost all of us. He has left behind him the memory of a life and character which were animated by one purpose, the simple desire to apply to all things, great and small alike, the highest principles of Christian duty. This he did with modest straightforwardness, and unfailing but unobtrusive zeal. Cheerful, genial and kindly, he lived a life which in public and private matters was always consistent. We shall not forget the value of his noble example.

We need to keep before us such an example of a quiet life devoted to good works. For we live in tumultuous days, in which many a Christian vainly longs to possess his soul in peace, amid the perpetual strife of tongues which fills him with bewilderment and dismay. We have passed through a year of trouble and disquiet, and we do not yet see the end approaching. There are those who love controversy and delight in the fray, who believe that the more

opinions expressed the better, and that conflict only can decide which opinions shall survive. There are others who with more or less regret accept controversy as inevitable, and are more or less sensible of its dangers to themselves. These are the voices which we hear. But we should always remember that the great body of Christians is composed of humble, pious souls, whose one object is to work in their Master's service, who like Him "do not strive or cry nor lift up their voice in the street," but who are inexpressibly pained at violent speech about holy things, at quarrels among professing Christians, at the suspension of good works for barren disputation, at the exhibition of self-will by those whom they wish to reverence. It is well to keep always before our eyes this permanent Christian consciousness, and to consider that no victory, which can be won by strong assertions or by appeal to coercion, can compensate for the offence which is given to these simple souls, who are in each generation Christ's little ones, whom He chiefly loves. You will admit that I should be untrue to the chief duty of my pastoral office if my chief care, my constant solicitude, were not for these in the first place.

But when this has been admitted, we have to face the fact that, wherever controversy arises, its speedy termination is an object to which all our endeavours should be turned. The first step towards ending any controversy is a clear statement of the points at issue. Unfortunately, it can never be expected that this statement should be made immediately. Controversy arises from a vague feeling of dissatisfaction, which

expresses itself at first in general terms. A little time is needed before this dissatisfaction discovers exactly against what it is directed; then more time is requisite before it is possible to discover how the necessary amendments can be wisely made. Now, judged in reference to this natural and necessary development which is common to all movements, it cannot be said that recent controversy has made much way towards a settlement. It has been carried on by dropping fire and skirmishing over a large field; there has been shown little capacity for coming to close quarters. Almost everything and everybody has been attacked by both sides: but little has been done to make the issue clear. Statements have been put forward couched in language unintelligible to the common consciousness; premises have been laid down vastly too large for the conclusions which they have aimed at covering; intemperate accusations have been loudly made; things have been said which seem to deny the existence of any authority competent to decide the questions which have been raised. I am inclined to say that almost everything has been neglected which practical wisdom could dictate. It is not from declarations on either side that anything is to be learned. We have to draw our own conclusions according to our own common sense. This I shall attempt to do to the best of my power. I should regret if in so doing, I expressed myself so badly as to seem guilty of any want of sympathy with any genuine desire to promote the extension of Christ's kingdom. I should regret if I said anything which tended to increase rather than diminish controversy.

But I am sure that definite issues must be faced, and must be faced soon. We cannot choose the forms in which questions are raised, or the times at which they are raised: but we must not allow any objections either to methods or reasons to hide from us our obligation to give a clear account of what we are doing and how and why we are doing it.

Now, let us consider the attitude of the average layman and see what answer can be made to him. He is uneasy and disturbed at two things. First, he has a notion that the system of the Church of England is being changed back again into the system which it was meant to reform; and secondly, he is profoundly shocked at the appearance of clerical insubordination. He is opposed to State interference in religious matters, and he recognises that Parliament is not the body best suited for their discussion. In fact he dreads the introduction of religion into current politics. "But," he asks himself, "how is this to be avoided?" The common conscience cannot go on seeing things done which it does not understand, and of which it disapproves, without explanation given or reason tendered. There must be some authority which is capable of settling these things: if not, such authority must be provided.

Now, I must frankly confess to you that in urging the consideration that these and such-like questions must be answered, I have been met with the reply that I was making religion depend on the goodwill of the "man in the street". Whether or no I personally am unduly amenable to popular opinion, I must leave each one of you to judge. But I would ask you to

consider what is implied in such an accusation in itself, I think the analysis will throw some light upon the present position of affairs. First of all, the Christian religion is apparently identified with certain adjuncts to the mode of performing Divine service, which have hitherto been customary in the Church of England. Now, it is this extraordinary want of proportion in defining the questions at issue—a want equally discernible on both sides—which prevents any real progress being made in discussion. If by religion is meant the contents of Christian truth, that truth is not affected by the mode of performing any service which aims at expressing it. All that can be said about ceremonies is, that they help the understanding or secure the attention of the worshipper. But what the worshipper understands and attends to is the service itself. Our services are written in English, and are intelligible to all. No adjuncts can seriously affect them or turn them into anything different from what they are. Ceremonies may be discussed in reference to their action on the human mind; to their possible danger of deadening intelligent appreciation by emotional appeal: but they cannot alter the service in itself. It seems to me that they are both defended and attacked with unnecessary heat. There would not be nearly so much heat shown in discussing the theological questions which are assumed to be behind the ceremonies. Is it not to be deprecated that we should approach questions from the outside?

It will be said that these outside things are the means of beguiling simple minds. Now, I have a good deal of evidence that there is a certain section,

at all events, of the public, who are beginning to be rather restive at the amount of care which is being bestowed upon their welfare. They think, rightly or wrongly, that they can take care of themselves. I observe that for the purpose of ordinary political discussions, we speak of the growth of popular intelligence; we speak of the great change which has been wrought by the advance of intelligence, we trust to the good sense of the community: we are not much disturbed by the eccentricities of a few, but regard them as the necessary results of increased intellectual fertility, which may safely be allowed to have their say, and stand their trial and then disappear. But in the sphere of religious thought and practice all these considerations are abandoned, in one direction at least. We are convinced that those who speak against religion altogether may be left unchecked to be dealt with by argument and experience, but we are seriously perturbed by an attempt to express religion by modes of which we do not approve, and are prepared to sharpen old weapons of coercion to prevent this result. Surely this is inconsistent. Surely there is only one method of dealing with opinions, however wrong-headed we may think them to be—the method of discussion and reasonable debate. Of course, it will be said, "We leave all tendencies of thought free to express themselves as they will; but we are concerned with maintaining the position of the Church of England". This is an excellent answer up to a certain point. Every institution must have a definite position, which can be explained and maintained. But I must confess that I am not quite

satisfied with the position of those who express the utmost respect and toleration towards Romanism, and then go on with redoubled virulence to denounce what they call Romanism in the Church of England. Surely behind the consideration of the place where opinions are expressed, stands the question of the truth of such opinions in themselves. The great truths of Christianity are common to all Christian bodies: their modes of worship have many points of resemblance. When a Church is moved with evangelistic zeal so strongly as is the Church of England at the present day, it is natural that various experiments should be made. It is inevitable that any experiment should bear a resemblance of some kind to something already existing in another religious body. Evangelistic methods have come into use, which resemble those formerly supposed to belong solely to Nonconformist bodies. Services have been made more attractive generally, by an attention to music which fifty years ago would have seemed dangerous. Now, services are in some cases wearing a form which seems suspiciously like an attempt to copy the forms of another religious body. What conclusion are we to draw? There is only one possible conclusion, that these things require consideration and regulation. They are important because they involve more serious issues than the passing desire to attract congregations, or to impress the mind of the people who live in squalid streets. Immediate success cannot justify anything. Experiments must give an account of their ultimate meaning. But the inquiry must be made patiently, without heat and without prejudice. We must, however, remember

that these things are not the essence of a Church. To call them in any sense a "religion" is an unpardonable exaggeration. To clothe them with absolute importance is to make religion ridiculous in the eyes of all thinking men. They have their place and their importance, but it is within the sphere of ecclesiastical order, not of religious truth.

It is not, then, religion itself which any one proposes to submit to "the man in the street". But I should like to bestow a little consideration on the definition of that personage who is supposed to represent current opinion. Has current opinion nothing to say to the manner in which the services of the Church are conducted? I suppose that the manner of conducting the services is regarded as one part of the method of teaching truth; otherwise it would be of no importance at all. Now, it would seem clear that any method of teaching must stand in relation to the intelligence of those whom it is meant to teach. There is no one method which is of universal obligation, or which is absolutely valid in itself. The best teacher is one who is least wedded to any particular method, who is versatile and quick to adapt himself to particular needs. If one method is misunderstood by many, or is unacceptable or awakens suspicion, surely these are considerations which any true teacher would wish to weigh. It is natural to expect that he would be eager to explain himself, desirous to remove all possible misunderstanding, and anxious to learn from the experience of the results of his method on other minds. The maintenance of a relationship of mutual trust and confidence between the clergy and the laity

is absolutely essential to the well-being of the Church. No particular advantages gained here and there can be set against the disturbance of this good understanding.

I know that it may be said that those who object to particular modes of conducting services, are not those who attend them; and that those who do so are quite content. This may be so, but every member of an institution is justified in feeling an interest in the general working of the institution. Services need not be the same in their accompaniments in every Church; but there must be a recognisable type, so that the plain man is not hopelessly bewildered if he goes into a Church which he does not ordinarily attend. Diversity must have its limits. It must not be allowed to destroy all conception of uniform method. Congregations must not carry their own preferences in little matters, to the extent of obscuring the general system of the Church to which they belong.

I will not enter in detail into the reasons which are given for or against the ceremonies which are complained of. I will only say one thing about them. They are largely due to an archæological revival adapted to one side of popular taste. The defect of an archæological revival is that it reproduces accidents which have become obsolete, because they were meaningless or were judged useless. When these accidents are challenged, it is hard to justify them on reasonable grounds. If it be granted that they are harmless in themselves, yet a persistent effort to bring them back gives them a dangerous prominence. We cannot revive old customs simply because they are old. We

can only revive them because the wants which they once supplied have come back again, and they are the best means of supplying them. A revival of forms and ceremonies threatens a revival of antiquated modes of thought and practice, which require justification. Any natural development tries to express itself simply and directly. Every system bears the marks of historical accidents in the past. No one framing a system at present would make it exactly as it has grown to be. But Englishmen are rather proud of the accidents of their own systems of every sort. And I think that what they bitterly resent at present is the attempt to wipe out the historical accidents of the system of their Church, and bring in the accidents of another system. This they believe that the Catholic Revival is endeavouring to do. An Englishman of the most intelligent type would always wish to say to an equally intelligent foreigner: "You miss in our system this or that; you think it odd we do not have it. But remember that we passed through a crisis which we do not wish to forget, and we are proud to bear the marks of it. We fought for liberty, and we wish to remember our conflict. We will not sacrifice the liberty which we won to the perfection of an ideal system."

I said at the beginning of my remarks that beyond the special points of controversy, public opinion was still more roused by the appearance of clerical insubordination. I need scarcely dwell upon the seriousness of such a charge. Society is founded upon law; and the Church is bound to set an example of order and obedience to authority. Nothing can compensate for

any failure in this primary duty. It is quite impossible that the management of ecclesiastical matters should continue to be a menace to the basis of civil life. I do not think that this insubordinate spirit is deep-seated. I think that very unfortunate things have been said; that abstract principles have been laid down in very misleading language; and that practical considerations have been overlooked. But I must say for my part that I have found a real desire to meet my wishes and to obey my directions. You will understand that in such matters as the ordering of services, a Bishop is dealing with clergymen who are living devoted lives among their people, who are powerful for good, and hesitate to make changes which they cannot fully explain. You will understand that congregations of simple folk, who value their services as they are, do not immediately realise that they ought to be changed because a stranger, who came to spy, saw something which he did not approve of, and wrote a garbled account to a newspaper. You will understand that I must be careful not to give directions which do not rest on principles which are universally applicable; and this is no easy matter. I daresay you have observed that the apparently simple and obvious direction that the service for Holy Communion should always be exactly said as it is appointed in the Book of Common Prayer—without additions or omission—has raised many questions, and has required explanation and adjustment. It has not been accepted without murmurings, and I admit that it has caused inconvenience to many. Every one thinks that particular additions or omissions, which may have imper-

ceptibly suggested themselves to him, through a desire to adapt the service to the special circumstances of his congregation, are so harmless and so obvious that no sensible man could object to them. Yet he is generally of opinion that the corresponding changes which have suggested themselves to some one else are objectionable, and ought at once to be checked. I mention this that I may make clear a point which is generally overlooked. A rigid adherence to the letter of the Rubrics as absolutely binding, and to be interpreted throughout by strictly legal methods, would lead to results which no one wishes. Let me give a very obvious illustration. The only provision made for any music other than in singing the services is after the Third Collect: "In choirs and places where they sing here followeth the Anthem". This on strict principles of interpretation excludes hymns altogether, and I doubt if it does not exclude even anthems in many churches. It would require much research to define exactly what is meant by the words "In choirs and places where they sing". If you can imagine the rise of a party who strongly object to hymn singing, I could foresee a long contest raising many points of historical interest and of very doubtful interpretation.

I give this instance to show that it is not so easy as it is supposed to give directions about services which are fair and just—which rest on principles and not on mere arbitrary preference. Of course things are harmful and harmless; but the tendency of the human mind is for each of us to take it for granted that what we ourselves do is harmless. It is the duty of every

one in authority to be strictly just; to lay down no principles which are not universally applicable; to carefully weigh and consider before judging; to be unmoved by popular clamour, and to condemn no man rashly.

Now, there are a great many ways of criticising services. I can assure you that my correspondence gives me an astonishing impression of the fertility of the human mind. I receive criticisms of every kind of service, going down even to the attitude and attire of the clergyman as he stands on the steps outside the church after the service is over. The limits of ritual significance are hard to determine. But it must be noted that ritual consists of a number of small things, many of which it is absolutely impossible for human ingenuity to regulate at all. There are certain matters which are obvious and affect the eye or other senses. These are important as making a marked difference in the way of conducting the service. Those who attach importance to certain ceremonies are to be afforded an opportunity of stating their reasons before the Archbishops. The statements then made and the decision given will do much to clear up doubts and establish principles, which will be generally accepted.

For it is only by a recognition of principles that we can reach peace. Ceremonies are nothing in themselves, and differences of opinion cannot be composed by attacking ceremonies. It is useless to deal with them as subjects for legal decision. Legal procedure narrows the point at issue, and pronounces an abstract decision concerning that point alone. If

men's minds are not satisfied about principles, the special points which can be raised about ceremonies are innumerable, and it is difficult to conceive of a coherent body of legal decisions which can deal with them all. A strictly legal regulation of every clergyman's attitude and gesture at every moment of the service is impossible to imagine. Sumptuary laws dealing with the habits of individuals have been failures whenever they were tried. It is abhorrent to the English mind to drag law into the details of ordinary life.

These things must be settled by the authorities of the Church—that is by the Bishops. They must be settled by them with reference to the fundamental principles of the Church of England; and if they have not exercised their authority sufficiently in the past, they must do so in the future. The chief function of the episcopal office in early times was to represent the unity of the Church. Several congregations tended to form special uses or to follow special modes of thought. It was the Bishop's office to bring these all into line, to check deviations from the established rules of faith and practice; and by conference with other Bishops to prevent local variations from confounding the unity of the Church. It is this function of his office which present needs bring clearly before a Bishop's mind. It may be that in the past, the needs of a great population seemed to demand diocesan organisation and the promotion of zeal and energy in practical work for saving souls. That is the work at present to which any true man would wish to devote himself. But we cannot always choose

for ourselves the sphere of our activities. If I have to interfere in small matters, if I have to seem to check zeal and curb enthusiasm, if I have to ask my clergy to pause and think about the relation of their own particular position to the whole Church, it is because such things are necessary, not because I take pleasure in doing them.

But I would say this. I do not wish to command so much as to persuade. I wish to induce people to see themselves as others see them; to regard what they are doing in reference to its far-off effects on the consciences of others; to cultivate a truer sense of the proportion of things; to deal more with ideas than with the clothing of ideas; to pay more attention to the reason of a thing than to its antiquity; to remember that the chief danger which besets those who are pursuing a high object is to confuse means with ends; to examine themselves very fully lest they confuse Christian zeal with the desire to have their own way, which is the characteristic of the purely natural man.

I do not like to speak about myself. But we have reached a point when some one must be responsible for leading; and a leader must be trusted. There is no leader possible save the Bishop. So I ask you all, clergy and laity alike, to trust me, and to follow me as far as you possibly can; and then I hope that in a little time, with a little patience and goodwill, we shall fall into line; suspicions will be banished, our services will not, it is true, be uniform—no one wishes that—but we shall all understand what we are all doing; and we shall combine our forces for the great work

which our Master has committed to us—a work which is sadly hampered by our dissensions. Alas! behind the smoke of controversy float the sad faces of the sinful and the miserable, whose melancholy eyes look down upon us with reproach, "What, do you leave me helpless, do you show me that in the best there is so little good, that they can quarrel about the way to goodness as angrily and as furiously as we poor wretches quarrel over our share in the rewards of sin?"

Surely, brethren, these things must not be. There is nothing so hateful in God's sight as dissension among Christians. The world needs an example of the right way to compose differences. I ask you, is the Church so untrue to its high mission that it cannot give such an example when called upon to do so?

I have spoken about the general aspect of affairs in the Church. It was impossible for me not to do so. But it is not a subject fitted for general discussion. The general position of the Church suggests questions which require answers, but Christian life still runs its usual course, and practical endeavours are not checked. Many a clergyman has said to me, "I read in the newspapers of a crisis in the Church, but it does not affect me or my parish". That is quite true. The general system may be somewhat out of gear, but its separate parts may work smoothly enough themselves. But do not let us suppose that that can be always so, or make that our excuse for mental indolence. While great questions are being discussed, we still have to live our daily life; and

sometimes we find in it greater refreshment, because of the confused shouting which fills our ears outside. Certainly there is no lack of suggestiveness in the subjects which have been proposed for our discussion in this Conference. They cover a wide field, and remind us of the vastness of the activity of the Church, and its close connexion with the national life. They show how much energy is applied to the consideration of its organisation and to the amendment of many points in its practice. Year by year the Church of England becomes larger and more important. Never, I think, did she engage in her service more of the earnestness and devotion of her children.

THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.[1]

IT is well that I should begin my remarks by making clear to you the exact object which I have in view. I can do so best by telling you how the subject on which I propose to address you was suggested to my own mind. I was talking to a candidate for Ordination, who was going out to work in the Mission Field in India. He said to me: "I wish that I had a clear answer to the question, 'What is the position of the Church of England in Christendom?' I know the claim of the Church of Rome—that it is a universal and divinely appointed institution, to which all men must belong. I know the claim of the Greek Church, that it preserves the Catholic Faith, and sets it forth in ancient forms, intelligible to simple people. I do not know any corresponding formula to describe the position of the Church of England."

It may seem to you odd that such a question should be asked, or that there should be any difficulty in supplying an answer. But the English mind is not fertile in definitions, and we are apt to rejoice in our freedom from the restraints of mere logic. The test of our institutions is their general adaptability to the work which they have to do. We judge them by the

[1] Address given to the Ruri-Decanal Conferences, in the diocese of London, 1899.

way in which they satisfy our own needs, not by the ease with which we can explain them to others. There is no ready definition of the British Constitution, nor, indeed, of any part of our national institutions. The Church of England has never undertaken to define its relations to other bodies, or to put forth any claims for universal acceptance. It was in the first instance avowedly an expression of the religious consciousness of the English people; and its position in the world depends upon its power of educating that consciousness to a true sense of its destiny.

In attempting to set forth the principles of the Church of England, I will use the plainest and least technical language. I may say at once that I repudiate all inferences which may be drawn from my phraseology. I am simply trying to discover the distinguishing features of the English Church as contrasted with other forms adopted for the organisation of the Catholic Church. They all have in common the great truths of the Christian Faith; they are all one in the Unity of the Spirit. There is unity between them, but it is not structural unity. It seems to me that a good understanding will best be attained by abandoning all attempts at reaching in any measurable time, and by any definite means, a unity of structure, and by a dispassionate comparison of the modes of working and of the objects pursued.

However much men may agree about the fundamental truths of the Christian Faith, we must expect them to differ about the methods of teaching these truths and the way, in which they are best brought home to individual souls. As a matter of fact differ-

ences exist about the organisation of the Church as a teaching body; and we often forget that all teaching must stand in some relation to the capacities of those who are to be taught, and the degree to which their education can be carried. I am not engaged in setting forth the entire position of the Church of England towards all questions of theology, but merely its distinctive characteristics when contrasted with other religious organisations.

If we consider the prevalent views on this subject, I think they may be divided into three:—

(1) The system of the Church of England is mainly that of continental Protestantism, which was partially arrested in this country by motives of political expediency.

(2) The Church of England is the Church of the Middle Ages, with its system somewhat mutilated by the steps which were necessary to get rid of the papal supremacy. Now that the papal supremacy and all its political consequences are past and gone, the careful restoration of some features of the ancient system, which were discarded through dread of Popery, is desirable.

(3) The Church of England is a compromise between two opposite tendencies of religious thought; and just as there are two political parties which keep one another in order, so there are two religious parties between whom the bishops must keep an even balance.

I cannot myself accept any one of these views. The Church of England seems to me to have a very decided position of its own—the noblest which can

be taken by any institution, but through its very loftiness easily capable of misrepresentation and of misunderstanding. I will try to explain my meaning.

The formula which most explains the position of the Church of England is that it rests on an appeal to sound learning. It may be said that this is an arrogant claim. Why should learning be the special prerogative of the English Church? To answer this question we must consider what took place in the sixteenth century, when the services and formularies of the Church of England were revised. During the Middle Ages, the Church of England was a portion of the Western Church, and shared in all its movements, though maintaining a certain aloofness, owing to its insular position. There were always in the Western Church two somewhat different lines of thought. One was concerned with maintaining and expressing popular devotion, the other with the great principles of the Catholic Faith. There came a time when these two tendencies became conscious of antagonism. The theology of the schoolmen, which had grown up to explain the practices which seemed necessary to meet popular demands, was exposed to the criticism of those whom the revival of learning had led to a more intelligent study of the records of early times. There was, on the one side, a massive system of logical theology which was difficult to attack on its own grounds. There was, on the other side, a growing sense that the ecclesiastical system which it maintained was obscuring rather than illustrating the vital principles on which the Christian life is founded. In the fifteenth century futile attempts

were made to reform the overgrown system of the Church. They failed, because the logical fabric of that system was so strong that it was difficult to deal with it in detail. It was hard to see where reform was to begin, or where it was to end. Reforming efforts ended in a sense of hopeless weariness; but one truth became apparent, that reform was only possible by returning to the principles of sound learning.

It was just this principle that was applied in the changes made in the English Church in the sixteenth century. It was not that England alone possessed the necessary learning; that learning and its conclusions had long been the common property of serious and thoughtful men. But England had the unique opportunity of applying it calmly and dispassionately. In foreign countries the Reformation movement was inextricably mingled with grave political disturbances. It wore a revolutionary aspect. It needed popular leaders whose opinions were necessarily coloured by the conflict in which they were engaged. The new theology had to be adapted to the purpose of attack and defence. This was not the case in England. There was no great leader whose personality impressed itself upon the changes that were made. There was no motive to attend to anything save the long record of the aspirations of sound learning. Our Prayer Book is the standing record of the result of this process. It is sometimes said that the Prayer Book is unduly exalted and extolled. This only means that while individually we might suggest additions or alterations in points of detail, there is no advance of learning

which modifies the general principles, with reference to which its work, as a whole, was done. There is no body of opinion which could, on the grounds of knowledge, suggest any material alterations.

What was the work which this learning had to do at the Reformation? It was the removal from the system of the Church of a mass of accretions which had grown round it, through its constant desire to meet the demands of popular devotion. It is an entirely wrong view to suppose that the Church of the Middle Ages went astray through the desire of the priesthood to grasp at power. Doubtless every man loves power, and every man tends to magnify his office; but power comes from doing what people want, and so long as people are satisfied, they do not keenly criticise the nature of the authority which gives them satisfaction. Curiosity is common to all men, and is applied to all subjects—especially to those which are of the greatest practical importance. It has always been difficult to preserve the Truth which God has made known to us, from the desire of man to expand it to meet his own requirements.

The clergy were soon exposed to this temptation, which they were not strong enough to resist. It requires a great deal of knowledge to be able to answer a question by saying "I do not know"; and this answer is never satisfactory to the inquirer. I remember, when I was at Cambridge, being told by the Secretary of the University Extension Lectures, that he had received a request from a local secretary, that a better lecturer might be sent for the next Session. He wrote in reply that their present lecturer

was the best man at his disposal, and he inquired the cause of dissatisfaction. The answer was that after one of his lectures he was asked a question, to which he answered, "I do not know". "Now," went on the local secretary, "we do not want a man who does not know." I quote this to show you how permanent and universal is the human desire to have its curiosity satisfied on all subjects, and how constant is the temptation to all teachers to pass beyond the bounds of knowledge and indulge in more or less plausible hypotheses.

Let us apply this consideration to the contents of the Christian Faith. Men often speak of the dogmas of the Church, as if they were deliberate attempts to impose certain arbitrary interpretations upon the truth contained in Scripture. The fact is just the opposite: they are the result of attempts to protect the historic record of the Gospel from arbitrary interpretations suggested by current modes of thought. The Creeds are brief statements of facts, against endeavours to explain those facts away.

Inside the Church the danger was, not that the Faith should be dissolved into speculation, but that additions should be made to it, beyond that amount of knowledge which God had thought fit to give. We see this curiosity in our Lord's time, and we see His mode of dealing with it. When one said unto Him, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" He answered, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate". Enough knowledge was given to direct individual effort and guide the individual life. More knowledge on such a point would only have weakened the motive

power of effort. So it is in all things; we know enough for our real good; we are bound to believe that more knowledge would not be really useful for us.

The source of corruption in the Church came from a disregard of this great principle. It was natural for men to ask questions; it was natural for the Church to give an answer. The Church as a teacher did not remember that it is one thing to explain the Truth, and another thing to add to it. It erred through too great kindliness, too great appreciation of the frailty of human nature. It answered questions till it had to justify its proceedings, and did so by a theory of development. I can illustrate the principles of this process from a sermon which I heard a few years ago in Cologne Cathedral. The subject was the honour due to the Blessed Virgin. The preacher told a story of a lady who was teaching her child to pray. When he had repeated after his mother, "Our Father, which art in Heaven," he looked up and said, "Have I only a Father in Heaven and not a mother?" "Yes," was the answer, "you have a mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary." "Now," said the preacher triumphantly, "what could a Protestant have said in answer to that child's question?" He considered this a conclusive argument. You will observe that this implies not only that there must be an answer to every question, but that the answer must be of the kind which the questioner expects and desires. It was precisely this conception that lay at the bottom of the theory of theological development.

In such a process the first step is the only impor-

tant one. The first slight addition that is permitted can easily be extended by logical acuteness. Let us take an instance. There is no subject on which curiosity is more natural than the condition of the departed. Our Lord tells us that after death the souls of the faithful are in God's keeping, and the souls of the wicked are in a state of punishment waiting the final judgment. Imagination was allowed to frame a picture, the details of which were rapidly filled in, till Dante could appeal to a current conception so strong as to admit of artistic accuracy. The process of purgation was assumed and defined. The duration of purgatory was estimated, and modes of remission were devised, which might be vicarious. Little by little a vast framework grew up, reducing at every step spiritual conceptions to mechanical observances, till the conscience of mankind rose against the system which had been carefully reared to meet its own demands. If we take any other point in the corruption of the Church, we would find in like manner that it came from a desire to meet the exigencies of popular devotion, and accommodate the Truth to the requirements of the troubled conscience.

The problem set before the leaders of our Church in the sixteenth century was to disentangle essential truth from the mass of opinion which had gathered around it. This opinion was supported by the claim of the ecclesiastical organisation, not only to bear witness to the Truth, but to explain it and amplify it, and incorporate successive explanations and amplifications with the Truth itself. The process of dividing accurately between the Truth and the accretions which

had grown round it was one which needed considerable care, and could only be done by the principles of what I have called sound learning. These principles apply, not only to theology, but to every other subject. The first step of any inquirer after truth is to consider carefully the material with which he is dealing, and the evidence which is available. He must reject specious hypotheses, however attractive they may be. I do not say that he may not cherish them for his own delectation, but he must distinguish clearly between what is proved and what he finds it helpful for himself to hold as an aid to his speculations. But truth itself must be regarded with supreme veneration as something not to be impaired by the limitations of the individual inquirer. As regards the Christian Faith, the evidence is contained in Scripture and in Scripture only. Good men may explain it, and may use it to answer those questions which the mind of man is continually asking about the mystery of its destiny; but sound learning dictates that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." This, which I have called the method of sound learning is the fundamental principle of the Church of England.

It was urged that the reference to Scripture meant an appeal to private judgment. In fact, beside a clear statement of the nature of the evidence applicable, it is necessary in every subject to state also the principles

of interpretation. The Church of England refers to the "decent order of the ancient Fathers"; that is to say, the methods of the primitive Church.

This is no arbitrary method of interpretation—it is a principle of criticism which is universally adopted. If a man wishes to understand Dante, he can only do so by largely reading the history and the thought of his time. If we wish to understand any author, we must know the ideas of those to whom he immediately addressed himself, the sense in which they would naturally interpret his language, and the practical application which they made of his principles. I do not say that this by any means exhausts the meaning of his message; but we must understand thus much in the first instance.

Reference to primitive times is particularly valuable for the interpretation of Scripture; for we tend to approach Scripture with prepossessions of our own. It has been the object of much misrepresentation; it has suffered from manifold controversies. Our minds, in fact, are somewhat sophisticated, and we need to step into a freer atmosphere. We go to primitive times that we may acquire a primitive attitude of mind and a primitive temper. I think that if the contents of the Prayer Book be carefully studied from this point of view, it is astonishing how primitive they are. They are singularly free from the stains of controversy; they aim only at setting forth the Truth in its purity and in its due proportion.

As a consequence of this, the Church of England puts to one side all that is irrelevant; it shuns definitions about questions which arose from mere human

curiosity; it is chary of denials in matters where affirmation and denial are alike impossible. It was the defect of one side of the Reformation on the Continent, that in its arduous struggle against error, it followed error on to its own ground and wasted its strength in passionate denials. There is a danger in confounding the maintenance of truth with combating error; the two things should be kept separate. If some one makes an unwarrantable assertion, all that I am justified in doing is to point out that he has no sufficient grounds for making it. In a matter where there is no evidence for certain knowledge, it does not follow that the denial of his assertion is any truer than the assertion itself. Disregard of this consideration has been a source of weakness to some systems. They have followed error to its own sphere and have tried to build up a counter system, instead of developing the Truth itself in a larger system, which excluded error by excluding the grounds on which it rested. It is this which has led to a misunderstanding of the term Protestant. There is a distinction between putting error to one side and holding the Truth in peace, and the method of continually attacking error by negative assertions without any adequate affirmations to take their place. The Church of England avoided this danger: it does not indulge in negations, but aims at setting forth the Truth in a simple and dignified system.

It is this characteristic which has led to the groundless assertion that the Church of England expresses a compromise. Sound learning must always wear the appearance of a compromise between ignorance

and plausible hypothesis. The human mind tends to think that because it asks a question, there must be an answer; because it raises a problem, there must be a solution. It is the function of learning to assert what is known, and to leave perverse ingenuity steadily alone. There is always a sphere for human questionings and human ingenuity. Learning may be sympathetic and may feel that excursions into the region of the unknown often result in fruitful suggestions; but none the less the Truth has to be guarded for what it is.

Let me apply this to the long controversy about the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Church of England sets aside two opinions on this point:—

(1) "It is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves, one to another, but rather is a Sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death . . . a partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ."

(2) "Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture."

What is the real nature of the controversy to which these two statements refer? Christians do not differ about the importance of the Sacrament, its value, or the spiritual benefit which it conveys; they do not differ about what is essential for the Rite itself, if we put aside the question of the Christian Ministry. They differ about the mode in which the outward elements become the vehicle of the Spiritual Grace. Can this question be answered? Is it for

man's good that it should be answered? The Church of England, resting upon sound learning, refuses to go beyond the words of Scripture and the practice of the Early Church. It defends the record of Scripture against two unwarrantable attempts to gratify man's curiosity, and leaves the Rite itself as it was left by our Lord. There is no compromise here, there is a mere reference to the nature of the evidence. If men choose to indulge in speculation on such a point, they do so for themselves and at their own risk; they must not claim to have their speculations incorporated into the system of the Church.

Such an attitude may doubtless seem to some minds cold and unsatisfactory; but where God has not spoken, man must keep silence. It is one duty of the Church to maintain the Divine reserve, and to uphold the Divine wisdom, against the specious demands of even the noblest forms of purely human emotion.

On the same principles the Church of England dealt with ecclesiastical discipline. It retained the framework of the primitive system, discarding those minute applications in points of detail which had robbed that system of its educational value. There were no precise definitions of the modes of observing the methods which had been found useful for training the Christian soul. The need of an opportunity for guidance by the unquiet, the scrupulous and the doubtful was recognised in cases of necessity; but the primary responsibility was left with the individual to make his peace with God. In all matters punctiliousness about trifles was avoided. The appeal

was made to conscience. Weight was given to instruction. The pastoral side of the priestly office was restored to due prominence. The method of our Lord's teaching was put before a mechanical appliance of His merits. In short, the Church of England was to be the Church of free men, educating them into a knowledge of the "liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free".

Similarly the services of the Church were brought back to their early simplicity; the time-honoured structure was retained, and its system was made "agreeable to the mind and purpose of the Old Fathers". Ceremonies were judged by the standard of order and intelligibility; the services were to be stately and dignified, and the ceremonies were to be such "that every man may understand what they do mean, and to what use they do serve". They were to be an accompaniment to, and an explanation of, the revised services, not an attempt to impose upon those services a meaning which was not their own.

I have spoken so far about the position of the Church of England as set forth in its formularies. There is another point with reference to which it has to be judged. Every ecclesiastical system stands in close relationship to the life of the people, which it undertakes to train in the knowledge of God. It has to be judged to some extent with reference to the type of character which it aims at creating and maintaining. We all know the type of character which, however imperfectly it may be realised by the individual, still floats before our minds as the ideal, which

we wish national life to express. The English ideal is that of a serious-minded, resolute, independent man loving justice, making for righteousness, strong in the fear of God. It is a great thing to possess such a national ideal. It will be said that its formation is not due to the unaided influence of the Church of England. I fully admit that it is the product of English Christianity, wrought out in some degree by the antagonisms which the system of the Church provoked; but it was the principles of that Church in themselves which created the new life of England in the sixteenth century. The question of their further extension only emphasised their inherent power. It is hard for us now to realise the enormous gulf which separates the England of Henry VIII. from the England of Elizabeth. A stride was unconsciously taken into a new sphere of ideas, which liberated human energies, created new aspirations, indicated new possibilities, and revealed dormant qualities which then sprang into conscious being. We may regret that this new life was too full to be retained within the limits of one system. Rulers in Church and State alike were afraid of its manifold activities, and of the disintegrating power of new ideas on a people whose training had made such a rapid advance. The rulers had to learn by experience the new qualities of the people. The only use to make of past mistakes is to accept their lessons. It is always difficult to choose between the apathy of indifference and the exuberance of excessive vitality. There is a temptation, when oppressed by one, to long for the other. But there can be no doubt which is preferable. Englishmen of

the present day have learnt, I hope, to make the best of the robustness of the English character, even when they find it for their own purposes excessive.

Perhaps we may all agree that we have reached a point in the development of the national character when its sterling qualities are sufficiently assured. Our task in the future is to impart to the strength of our national character some of the finer elements which up to the present have not been unduly cultivated. I may be prejudiced in my opinion, but I think that the system of the Church affords the best means for adding still more to our national character those qualities which it has ever striven to impart, and which the tendency of our national growth makes it increasingly necessary that we should acquire. Let me point out some of the ways in which this is done. First, the Church is a great witness to the continuity of national life, and the method of the Divine training of our race. It raises a constant protest against excessive self-assertion, against unbridled individualism ; it urges the claims of corporate life as supreme. Secondly, the system of its services maintains the due proportion of Christian truth, and so preserves an even balance of the mind, which is especially needful when the growing complexity of society tends to make men fix their attention on particular points, and follow individual teachers in particular causes, disregarding their relation to the social fabric as a whole. Thirdly, the dignified language of the Prayer Book sets a standard of reverence which, in the present day, it is specially necessary to maintain. Fourthly, the system of the Church affords adequate, but not undue,

scope for those powers of æsthetic perception which cannot be repressed without impairing the fulness of human nature. Any system which aims at developing character in its completeness, must pay due regard to the balance of qualities wherewith that nature has been endowed by its Creator. The whole of man has to be claimed for Christ, and purified and sanctified by His Spirit. The co-ordination of these qualities so as to work harmoniously for the highest purpose of man's being, is an object which cannot be neglected.

The Church of England has borne a great part in the making of the English people. It has spread over a vast Empire, and is indissolubly associated with human progress. It is exposed to exceptional dangers, owing to its high standard. It requires of all its sons a conscious effort to raise themselves to the level of the demands which it makes upon their intelligence. It forges no fetters; it knows no mechanical system; it does not impair the responsibility of the individual soul. It sets forth the Truth of Christ with that austere grace in which alone truth can be clothed. It makes no compromises with transient modes of thought or passing phases of popular desire. It is the system which above all others has the promise of the future, if we are right in supposing that the future will be more and more guided by an intelligent pursuit of truth and righteousness.

The great danger of the present day is lest the aspirations of the highest minds, profoundly Christian and profoundly moral, should desert all ecclesiastical systems, because they are stereotyped by the remnants of ancient controversies and present suspicions, because

they are unable to move freely and face the real work which they are called upon to do. This danger is intensified by ignoble struggles about matters of detail, conducted without reference to great principles. This gradual alienation of thoughtful minds from the system of the Church has occurred in other countries, with lamentable results to the national life. We of the Church of England are still in close touch with the vigorous life of a great people. It behoves us to realise the greatness of our opportunity, and to work together in the cause of God's Truth on the basis of a frank and loyal acceptance of those principles which I have endeavoured to set before you—the principles which guided our forefathers in the past, and which have lost none of their ancient virtue.

So far I spoke in addresses which I have been giving throughout my Diocese. I was anxious to put forward general principles, and not to imperil such effect as my words might have by reference to the details of present controversy. Good understanding can only come from a general acceptance of definite principles in the first instance. I think it well to go a step farther, and make some attempt to discover more precisely than has yet been done what are some causes of the present disquiet, and what are the principles underlying them.

(1) There has been an attempt, on purely missionary grounds, to adapt the services of the Church to what were supposed to be the needs of the people; to make the services more pointed, to emphasise certain aspects of them, in some cases to expand and in other cases to narrow their scope. It is with reference to

this that I have called attention to the danger of interpreting popular demands and taking them too exclusively as a guide.

(2) Along with this there has been in a few cases a tendency to introduce teaching on subjects which were omitted in the revision of the Prayer Book. I have pointed out the difference between the Truth of God and human hypotheses which have been added to it. We stand, and must always stand, upon what God has made known to us. This must not be obscured by speculation about outlying subjects which tends to obscure great central truths.

(3) There has been a desire to give greater dignity to the services of the Church as a part of public life. This is entirely a question of degree, and might be discussed by itself as a matter of common sense, which it is undesirable to mix up with any theological considerations whatever.

(4) There has been a desire to break down, somewhat too precipitately, the barriers of our insularity by emphasising the points of resemblance between the system of the English Church and that of foreign Churches. I do not wish to discuss the wisdom of this attempt; but it accounts for the use of phraseology which has excited suspicion, and which I think very unwise. It is enough for me to point out that the desire to be on better terms with our neighbours cannot be accomplished by any sacrifice of our own principles. Other peoples must clearly understand what we are, and what we mean, before we can profitably discuss the question of more friendly relationship.

If these are some of the broader aspects of the motives which have led to changes, it is well to consider the general grounds on which the opposition to them rests.

(1) It is necessary that there should be a recognisable type of the Anglican services, so that worshippers may not be confused by the multiplicity of variations. Habit counts for much in human nature. In a time when people move about so much, it is perplexing to find marked variations in the rendering of the services. We must have a clear understanding about the limits of permissible variation.

(2) There is a dim consciousness that some of the methods which have been employed come perilously near to the inauguration of a new system of theological development backwards, with all its accompanying dangers. All ground for this fear must be removed.

(3) Unwise attempts to revive ecclesiastical discipline on arbitrary lines have led to a fear lest a new type of character should be produced, lacking in that robustness which Englishmen rightly prize. This is a point which more than any other comes home to every Englishman's heart. He cannot sympathise with punctiliousness about trifles, with excessive scrupulosity, with practices which rest on authority and not on the reason of the thing. This, I think, is at the bottom of his dread of sacerdotalism. He will not endure an ecclesiastical system which pursues small objects of its own apart from their connexion with the great stream of national life. This seems to me to be the primary consideration

which all have to face, and only the frank acceptance of it will restore lasting peace.

(4) Things have been done, on principles which seemed to imply that the system of the Church of England could be supplemented at will, and that the authority of the officers of the Church of England could be overruled by an appeal to some more binding authority, the secret nature of which was apparently locked up in the bosom of the individual recalcitrant. This entirely impossible position must be frankly abandoned.

I am aware that perfect peace and agreement cannot come at once, or indeed ever in this imperfect world; but those who are dealing with the highest interests of man may at least avoid conscious misrepresentation and appeals to prejudice. If controversy is inevitable, it should be about principles and not about petty details. We need not unduly regret a crisis which compels us to think more seriously and to weigh the tendency of our actions, not only as they appear in our own eyes, but in their relation to the religious life of our country as a whole.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE CHURCH CONGRESS LONDON 1899.

It is interesting to find that, although the Church Congress is a venerable institution, it has not yet exhausted all its possibilities. The fact that it meets in London is a novelty. I hope you will not say that it is a disagreeable novelty. At all events I will assure you that it is not my fault. Last year, just as I had returned from a holiday, and my mind was in that generally amiable and confiding condition which a holiday is intended to create, I received a telegram, demanding an immediate answer, which asked if I would welcome the Church Congress in London. I had no time to consult any of my advisers, whose duty, as you know, is to curb my excessive benevolence; and I felt that I might be causing inconvenience if I sent a selfish refusal. So I left myself in the hands of the Committee, though I reflected with a sigh that I was weakly parting with one of the traditional immunities of the See of London. Indeed, when I was appointed to that office, and was searching for some compensations, one of the thoughts which crossed my mind was, "Well, at least, I am safe from the labours of a Church Congress". Now the ever-growing audacity of Archdeacon Emery has dispelled my untimely satisfaction. I have to face you, like the

rest of my episcopal brethren. We must make the best of one another for a few days.

It would be in accordance with custom that I should welcome you to the place of your meeting. But no one needs a welcome to London, and no one has much ground for standing forward to give it. London belongs to everybody, to come and go as he pleases; and no one can venture to speak in behalf of London as a whole. There is little which any one can do to add to the attractions which it always offers. But what could be done to make our meeting pleasant we have tried to do; and we have been entirely unanimous in our efforts. I would only say that this assembly has excited much more interest and called forth much more sympathy than I should have ventured to expect.

Other places may suggest particular reminiscences of the past, or may present particular problems on which a President may appropriately dwell. London is associated with all the fortunes of England, and contains in some shape or another all its problems. Its interest, I might say its fascination, lies in the abundant life and energy which surges round you on all sides, leaving little room for musings on the past, stirring you to a sense of the vastness of the issues of the present, and prompting many wondering thoughts about the future. Life in all its manifoldness surrounds us, and sweeps us into restless sympathy with its overwhelming force. National life, municipal life, intellectual life, the life of society, of commerce, of industry—all the multitudinous forces which mould the world, are working here with bewildering intensity.

The largeness of the scale gives a sense of abstractness to the general result of divers efforts. We seem to be in the presence of a great human machine, which is continually at work, weighing and testing for its own purposes, by the irresistible weight of sheer vastness, ideas, principles, projects; selecting some, and rejecting others; remorselessly eliminating what is not needed for immediate use. It is the concentration of so many energies, the number of the forces at work, and the freedom of their action which make the marvel of London of to-day. I often wonder, when I talk with intelligent observers from foreign lands, if we adequately realise the weight of our responsibility. It is owing to no special merits of our own, no wisdom which we have personally acquired, that we are placed as we are. We have inherited opportunities and qualities alike, which enable us to make experiments, where other peoples are obliged to hesitate. We have a basis of mutual confidence and good understanding; we have a practical temper of mind which does not wander into impossibilities; we have a sense of justice and fairness which gives a perspective to our plans. It is in our power to amend, to discuss, to discover, to make fruitful experiments, where other peoples are afraid to venture. It is a great opportunity; it is also a great responsibility. Are we using it?

Of course this question can be variously answered according to the standard by which we try our efforts. It is obvious that much more might be done than is done, always, by every one. But if we try to compare the tendency of modern aspirations with those of

previous times, I think we shall agree that it is higher. Let me put it this way. The avowed object of every right-thinking man at the present day is to try to raise all to the level of the best. He recognises that the danger of every social organism is that it contains in itself noxious survivals of every stage through which it has passed. He aims at destroying the conditions which allow these lower types to perpetuate themselves. Steady and careful amelioration of the general conditions of life is the object of our legislation and our philanthropy. This is the avowed aim of the activity of the world around us, when it is working at its best.

I do not say this from any desire to praise our noble selves. I feel deeply the little done compared with the vast undone. I know how work in particular directions, for temperance, for purity, for the care of any particular class, is depressing from its revelation of the inveterate forces of indolence, apathy, indifference, selfishness and the like. I know how often we sigh over human nature as it is, and wish that it was just a little more adaptable to our beneficent endeavours. What I mean is, that if we try to make a fair estimate of the tendencies of the world around us, we feel an upward movement of things. Never was conduct more highly esteemed ; never was there a more widely diffused sense of duty. The world is trying to do well by itself.

I have spoken of this, not to promote your self-satisfaction, but for a definite purpose. The great question which runs through all the discussions of a Church Congress is : How can the Church best do its

work in the world? If we are to answer this we must do justice to the world; we must appreciate fully the best tendencies which are at work in it; we must understand the general direction of its efforts. There was a time when the Church stood to the world as the sole upholder of the claims of righteousness; when the world, on its secular side, went on its own way, and left the Church to redress the wrongs which it wrought, and heal the wounds which it caused. Much of the language of the past was framed on this supposition, which breathes through the noblest utterances of the Middle Ages. Those utterances are still read and quoted, and their echoes give an air of unreality to claims which are frequently made. This is to be avoided on one hand. On the other hand, the Church is often spoken of in patronising tones by politicians, philanthropists and men of action as being alive to the needs of the time, as providing useful agencies for the good of society, in short, as an estimable factor in the system of the world's beneficence. I think we must maintain ourselves on solid ground between these two conceptions; we must make our position clear, neither overstating it nor allowing it to be obscured.

What then are we to say for ourselves? First of all, we may rejoice unfeignedly at the result already achieved. In all that is good in the world's energies we recognise the fruits of the Incarnation, a new conception of humanity, and of its possibilities—a new conception once, which has now grown so old that it is accepted as natural and universal, and its origin is frequently forgotten. I need not dwell upon the

characteristics of Christian civilisation. It is enough for me to point out that the dominant idea in any system of civilisation is that of the relationship which exists between man and man. It is the recognition of rights and duties, the consideration which one man feels bound to show towards another, which determine ultimately the scope of society and politics. The idea which prevails amongst ourselves is derived from Christianity, and we at the present day are growing more conscious of that fact. The truth is borne in upon us by our Imperial responsibilities, which bring us into close relationships with peoples of other creeds. As our relations grow more intimate, and we understand better their views of life, we learn to appreciate alike their virtues and their limitations. We feel that we may give them good government, education, protection, peace; but that we cannot by all our care for outward things win their confidence or secure their gratitude. This is only possible if we can explain to them our attitude towards life, towards one another, and towards themselves; if we can communicate to them something of our spirit. It is useless to play on the surface of things, and justify ourselves by external benefits or advantages. We must compare our fundamental ideas; and these are contained in our religion. What a man is, and what he is striving to do, can only be expressed in terms of his relationship to God. Put the matter as you will, religion is the only possible form of popular metaphysics; it is to the common consciousness the interpretation of life. Then I say that our Imperial position is forcing upon us the duty of realising fully what is meant by Christian civilisation.

We cannot carry civilisation without Christianity. Foreign missions can no longer be regarded as a luxury, the hobby of a few enthusiasts, a tolerated appendage to our civilising work in the world. They are of the very essence of that work. Apart from their immediate success, from the number of converts, and such like considerations, they are necessary to explain what Englishmen are, and what they are trying to do; how they regard life, and how they look on their fellow-men. It was impossible for the Church Congress to meet in London without giving foreign missions a foremost place in the subjects for our deliberation.

The Church has created Christian civilisation, and must be the chief agent in spreading that civilisation in other lands. Meanwhile, it must maintain and heighten it at home. I often think that, in our quiet days, we take our rich heritage as a thing given, an assured possession, which we can never lose, and are certain to increase. "We have put our house in order;" we say, "it will stand, and we will build on to it as our needs require; or we may make alterations if that seem better". We forget the need of constant care and watchfulness to keep it in repair. All that we have has been wrung from reluctant nature, whose forces are always directed against our aggression. The winds beat upon our house, the rain falls and the storms burst. Care and resources alike are necessary to repair the insidious ravages of inevitable decay. The world is full of ruins which a brief space of neglect has left irreparable, save at an impossible cost. It costs much to maintain what we

have, before we can afford to make improvements. Now, on the Church falls directly the maintenance of the basis of national life. The politician and the philanthropist are always counting on an assured balance, and are fertile in devising means of spending it. They deal with men in the mass. They assume popular intelligence, foresight, goodwill and readiness to make personal sacrifice to the common good. They forget that these qualities are not natural, but imparted. The public mind, and the public conscience do not go on automatically, like a public water supply. Mind and conscience are individual matters, and have to be cultivated from the beginning in the case of every one born into the world. This quiet work of creating character is the continuous contribution which the Church makes to the life of the nation. I think that this is increasingly realised. I think that the influence of Christianity on society is more truly apprehended at the present day than ever before. One of the most noticeable features of our own times is the disappearance of the belief that it was possible to substitute a system of philosophy for a religion, and that Christian ethics could stand by themselves apart from Christian doctrine. The significance of the Christian Faith, as a whole, the nature and power of the Christian motive, and its unique value for creating character—these things have been tacitly admitted and the application of religion to life is watched as a matter of public interest.

Perhaps some of you may think that lately it has been watched with too much interest, and that public discussion about the affairs of the Church has been

excessive in amount, if not in wisdom. Well, I will frankly say that I prefer excitement to indifference, and interest to neglect. It is at least clear that there are many who attach great importance to what the Church is doing. Of course, criticisms are not always either wise or kindly; but they are always useful as showing the point of view of somebody. Now the point which has struck me as being at the bottom of much recent controversy is just this: the relation between religion and character. The objection raised to some forms of worship and discipline is that they tend to weaken, rather than strengthen, character, that their influence is retrograde rather than progressive. This is a matter which is capable of discussion with reference to man's nature and aspirations. It is from that point of view that the question of worship and ritual comes before you.

I return, however, to my subject. I said that the influence of religion was frankly recognised amongst us at the present day. I think that this is largely due to the fact that there has grown upon the public mind a sense of the great problems of the world's future. It has been forced upon us that "we are members one of another"; and that the relative place of nations depends entirely on national qualities. We, as a nation, have been driven to think about the meaning of our national life, its aims and tendencies. It has dawned upon us that human energy does not depend merely on a desire for gain, but upon some principle which gives it persistency in working for an end which cannot be immediately secured. The world itself prescribes its own objects and pursues

them; but it clamours for success, and will not long continue in a course which does not yield quick results. It is the great function of the Church to work for a far-off end, and patiently to introduce, here and there, into a world which is admittedly imperfect, some indications and assurances of unknown and unrealised possibilities. There is a "kingdom of heaven" set over against this, our earthly heritage. There is a transformed and renewed nature of man, which can understand and appreciate the laws of that kingdom. There is a faithful band of those who strive to act as citizens of that heavenly kingdom, and apply its principles to the questions which this earthly realm is evermore suggesting. The Church, in every age, is the expression of this endeavour. It upholds a standard; it sets forth an aim; and round its standard and its aim all that is best in our efforts gathers and is strengthened. I venture to think that this is one of the great characteristics of our own day and of our own country. There was a time, not far distant, when philanthropy believed that it could devise its own objects, and create its own force to carry them out. This belief has silently passed away. We may be thankful that in England, our religious organisations of every kind do not pursue objects of their own apart from the life of the nation. They are willing, nay desirous, to work for all good ends, and carry their purifying and regenerating power into any part of human life; and where the cry of human need is heard, they are ready at a moment to advance. Philanthropists thought that they could occupy new fields by new methods. They found the field already oc-

cupied by Christian effort, which was making its experiments quietly, and was ready to learn from every side. They found that it was easy to supply principles, but hard to create the workers necessary to carry them out. They found that mankind may be described as a mass, but have to be educated and formed as individuals; and this slow, constant, quiet labour can only be carried on by an institution which can command zeal and patience, given for love, and not to be bought for money; carried on by men and women of all classes, with a care and fervour which could not be taught by any method, but was the result of Divine compassion. It is not too much to say that no project for the improvement of any section of the community is ever started amongst us, without seeking frankly and fully the help and co-operation of religious organisations.

You will pardon me if I say that I feel keenly the weight of responsibility which is thrown upon the Church. The world needs our help: the time is rich in opportunities. It is well for us to discuss the forms which are given by human thought to the perpetual effort of mankind to improve the conditions of human life. It is quite true that for such discussion to be fruitful there is need of accurate knowledge of the details of our complicated system of society; but knowledge must be quickened by a deep-seated love of justice and righteousness which, as Christian men and women, we are bound to keep foremost in our hearts. It is this love of righteousness which gives the power to solve problems insoluble in the cold light of reason. It can call into being new motives,

can overcome indifference, can abolish prejudice, can sweep away selfishness, and kindle courage which is resolved to overcome difficulties by sacrifice. Many things good in themselves are left undone because they are too costly. A little reflection, a wise forecast of advantages to be gained, a faith that lifts us beyond the calculation of immediate loss to ourselves, a burning desire to make the future better than the past, a belief that God calls us to work with Him for good to all men—these are sources of the power which bears society onwards. They create the force which moves the world. Their origin and their home is in the Church of Christ.

Has it not been so, I would ask you, in the past? The history of the Christian Church is a record of effort and aspiration—by no means continuous, I admit, and sometimes perverted—for the good of society. Take any object of public benefit, now recognised as necessary, and follow it back; you will find that it came into being under the protection of the Christian Church. The Church educated the State, or educated public feeling, to see its necessity, until it was taken over as an avowed object of universal pursuit. It is well that this process should go on, that the whole community should be saddled with duties which it recognises as its own, whether it be conscious of their Christian origin or not. The Church still has new worlds to conquer, new energies to put forth, new portions of life to claim as its own, new fields to cultivate in its Master's name. Questions regarding human relationships, which once were supposed to be regulated solely by economic considera-

tions, need the careful application of the efficacy of Christian love, and the conception of brotherhood in Christ. There are grievous blots in our common life, such as intemperance and impurity, which must be set in their true light and seen in all their hideousness before any remedy can be applied. The light that shines from Christ is a perpetual revelation; it gives a consciousness of darkness, and the darkness must be felt. There are times when the world exclaims in weariness, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" And the Church must answer that there can be no rest so long as evil remains unchecked; "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light".

Boundless are our possibilities of fruitful service. Shall we not use them rightly?

We of the Church of England are in close touch with the vigorous life of a free people. The great work which God in His providence has assigned to us is to labour for, and with, and through that people. To wish to abandon such a work seems to me little short of treachery, to hope to replace it by a cosmopolitan mission seems to me more than folly. I will not elaborate these propositions. It is the peculiarity of all English institutions that they are avowedly capable of amendment, and that they are from time to time amended. I rather think that for that very reason they work better than the more logical and elaborate institutions of other countries, which are admirable on paper, but somehow fail in practical efficiency. We do not in England claim perfection for any of our belongings; but we are prepared to

amend them, if we are convinced that the change is for the better. We cannot, however, make changes unless we are all agreed; but we are capable of listening to arguments, and we are desirous to find room for all experiments which make for a good end. These are general propositions which you will not dispute. Now I think that within the ground which they cover there is ample room for the exercise of all our energies about matters of ecclesiastical organisation. No one can regret more than I do that it is my misfortune to have to compose ecclesiastical disputes, which are obvious and attract attention, as well as to direct Christian effort, which goes on quietly and is unrecognised. But we have to take things as they come, and seek the good that may come out of them. Now there are various tendencies of Christian thought, and it is possible for any of them at times to become exaggerated. This causes annoyance to some, who immediately set to work to cure this exaggeration on one side by an equal exaggeration on the other. Much talk ensues, and brings with it much reflection, the results of which are slowly and silently absorbed by the great majority to which the practical appeal in all things is always made.

I am addressing a large audience. I would say to you that the best way to deal with any question is to reduce it to its proper proportions, as a matter of actual fact. Advocates on either side magnify the importance of what they are defending or attacking. Everything is always at stake. The future of the Church and realm depends on your acceptance of their opinion. Now, I suppose, that common sense

acts by reminding us that we are neither so wise nor so foolish as we are sometimes led to believe. If the deliberations of the Congress should carry home this truth to many of you, they will not have been in vain.

For myself—shall I venture to confess it?—I have an ideal of the Church of England, which has steadily grown with my growth. I see in it a Church, not existing in indefinite space, and founding claims to universality on the ground that it has no particular home, but a Church rooted in the minds and hearts of the English people. I am not ashamed to say that, as I look round the world I see no other home so well suited for a Divine institution. From that home it can go forth courageously, and face the world as it is, believing that God's revelation of Himself, once made in the person of Christ Jesus, is being continually explained to man by that progressive revelation of God's purpose which is continually being made by the Divine government of the world. Steadfast in its hold on the Faith and on the Sacraments by its unbroken link with the past, it exists for the maintenance of God's truth and its application to the needs of man, not for the purpose of upholding its own power. A Church fitted for free men, training them in knowledge and in reverence alike; disentangling the spirit from the form, because of its close contact with sons who love their mother and frankly speak out their minds; not wandering among formulæ, however beautiful, which have lost their meaning; finding room increasingly for every form of devotional life, but training its graces into close connexion with men's endeavours and aspirations; having no objects

of its own which it cannot explain and make manifest as being for the highest good of all; afraid of nothing, receptive of new impulses; quick, watchful, alert; proving all things, and ever ready to give a reason for its principles and for their application; exhorting, persuading, convincing; so rooted in the past that it is strong in the present, and evermore hopeful of the future. For the great work of the Church of Christ is to mould the future, and so hasten the coming of the kingdom. Its eyes are turned to the past for instruction and warning, not for imitation. Steadfast in the faith, built up on the foundation which its Master laid, it can speak the truth in love, using such words and methods as men can best understand; so penetrated by the importance of its message that it can speak it in manifold ways, to men of varying tempers and knowledge and feelings, but striving to speak it in such a way that the method of its teaching ever elevates and invigorates the taught.

Is this only a dream, to be realised—for realised assuredly it must be—at some future time, and under some other name? Or shall we enter upon the possession which is really ours, did we but know it? Our difficulties and differences arise because we have not a sufficiently lofty conception of the destiny of the English Church. If any disaster befalls it, the record that will be written hereafter will be that English Churchmen of this our day were not sufficiently large-hearted and high-minded to recognise the greatness of the heritage which was theirs.

If I have spoken to you of large issues, it is because I feel that our meeting in the capital of England at

this particular time is an occasion of special importance. Our temper and our attitude will be keenly watched. "A city set on an hill cannot be hid." But we know that we stand also in the sight of God. May He direct our thoughts and words that they may be instinct with that love wherewith He loves all the children whom He has created.

THE CHURCH AND THE NATION.

A CHARGE DELIVERED TO THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF LONDON AT ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL CHURCH ON 21ST FEBRUARY, 1900.

A BISHOP'S VISITATION is, properly speaking, an inquiry on his part into the condition of the several parishes within his Diocese. It has long been customary for him, after conducting such an inquiry by means of articles, to address his clergy upon some of the points, which the answers to such articles have suggested to his mind. I have ventured, on the occasion of my first Visitation, to depart from this practice, and to address you before issuing my inquiries, rather than address you afterwards, when the results were before me. My reason for adopting this method is, that I wished to feel myself quite free in expressing my own opinions on matters of grave importance, and I could feel this better if I were avowedly speaking from general impressions rather than particular information. I wish to avoid the appearance of addressing admonitions to particular bodies of the clergy. Further, I am in hopes that what I may say may lead some of you to consider matters which I think it desirable to put before you, and may in some degree affect the answers to the questions which will shortly be issued. On any points raised by those answers I think it best to communi-

cate with you privately. In this way my Visitation may more resemble ancient methods than the more general form which has lately been substituted for them.

I am aware that this method of procedure will involve a great deal of personal trouble to myself. But when I look back on the three years during which I have been privileged to labour among you, I am conscious that the great difficulty attaching to the work of a Bishop in this Diocese, is that of gaining an intimate knowledge of all his clergy and of their parishes. It is inevitable that his attention should be given to particular cases where his counsel is needed. So many parishes are undergoing serious changes, and present particular problems, that they perforce have to occupy his attention, to the exclusion of others which are working quietly on established lines. A Bishop of London is, unfortunately, in a position resembling that of a physician. He has so many cases of urgency before him, that his time is fully occupied in attending to them. But I am glad to think that an increase in the number of suffragan bishops, and the valuable help of Bishop Barry, have allowed the formation of manageable districts, each with a head to whom recourse can be had for general counsel and advice. I trust that all parishes are aware that they are under effective supervision, and that their general conditions are constantly being brought to my notice. It must be a matter of time before I can hope to know all the clergy as intimately as I would wish to know them. But I trust that every year will add largely to the number of those who are able to regard

me as a personal friend. This is the true relation which ought to exist between a Bishop and his clergy. It is a cause of great regret to me that I have been compelled to give directions to many whom I did not know with that personal knowledge, which alone can enable them to interpret rightly letters, which have to suffer from the brevity which is rendered necessary by the pressure of business. The true mode of procedure for a Bishop is to offer friendly, even before he has recourse to fatherly, advice. His strictly official position should very rarely be needed. I am sorry that I have so often had to address you from that point of view first. I can assure you that it has been very contrary to my own inclinations. Formal and technical relationships are not those which are in accordance with the true meaning of the spiritual work in which we are all engaged.

There are a great many points on which I could have wished to address you. It is impossible for any one who comes to London not to feel keenly the peculiar problems which it raises, the differences between the work of the clergy in London and in other Dioceses where population is differently distributed. London raises questions which are unknown to experience elsewhere, questions of great complexity. There is always a danger that their solution with reference to conditions which exist only here, should react elsewhere, and form a precedent which is followed where no corresponding necessity exists. I think that perhaps this danger is not so strongly before your minds as it is bound to be before the mind of your Bishop.

Another point of great practical difficulty is the large excess in this Diocese of licensed curates over beneficed clergy. I am glad to say that the relations between incumbents and curates are regulated by admirable temper on both sides, and that the zeal of both classes is beyond praise. For this very reason any differences which arise are exceedingly delicate, and tax all my powers to do justice to the various interests involved. I do not propose to dwell at length on this subject; but I would impress upon you all, incumbents and curates alike, the need of a very careful consideration of the nature of the relationship which exists between you, of the grave responsibility which such a relationship involves, and of the need of prudence before entering upon it, and of tact and mutual goodwill in maintaining it.

I pass, however, at once to the main subject on which I must speak. It must be a matter of very serious regret to all of you, that ecclesiastical questions should for so long a time have occupied a prominent place in public attention, and should have given rise to so much controversy. Whatever may be your opinion about the importance of the points at issue, or about the need for controversy, you will all agree with me in thinking that the diversion of energy from practical work, and the appearance of disunion and dissension, are in themselves disastrous; and that true wisdom demands that we should consider how suspicion can be allayed, and the Church be able to resume its proper task of working peacefully for the highest interests of the people. Where misunderstandings arise there is a period of mutual recriminations,

which do not help forward a solution. Peace is only possible when the real points at issue are fairly stated, and are admitted. Then they may be discussed on their merits, and the necessary limitations on private and personal wishes may be clearly discerned. The wishes and the welfare of the whole Christian community must, in the long run, be the test by which the issue must be decided. So far as controversy is productive of any result, it is by its power of informing and educating that Christian consciousness which must ultimately be the arbiter. This is what I have steadily endeavoured to urge, in public and in private. I would venture to urge it more formally upon you to-day, and in so doing I would try to discover some general principles which all would, in some measure, recognise.

First of all, I think that it is necessary to admit the importance and nature of the issue which has been raised. Its meaning lies in this—that certain tendencies within the Church are viewed with suspicion by the people at large. It is obviously desirable that, if this suspicion is unfounded, it should be allayed by frank explanation. But such explanation must have reference to the grounds actually taken by the objectors—*i.e.*, to their conception of the position and principles of the Church of England—not to some ideal conception of that Church, which may be logically tenable, but has little connexion with the historical past. Controversy which disregards facts and takes refuge in dialectic, is not likely to lead to any profitable result. It begins by disregarding the common consciousness, and is satisfied

by erecting a system which seems impregnable on paper, but has no corresponding reality It claims a magnificent position as an unassailable ideal, and then tries to maintain itself in actual fact by allies gathered from any quarter. The proposition that difficult questions can only be settled by expert opinion is indisputable; but that opinion must rest upon principles which are readily intelligible. The great object of any ecclesiastical institution is to keep religion in close contact with life. Anything which needs elaborate explanation or justification is to be deprecated on that ground alone.

It is, unfortunately, true that the Christian religion has given rise to many controversies and has been the cause of many conflicts. This is not due so much to the fact that the Christian religion is especially open to doubts about its meaning, as to the fact that it has a power of its own, apart from the system in which it is clothed, and has always insensibly trained its children into freedom. Christianity has created aspirations and desires which have come into conflict with existing forms of ecclesiastical organisation. The danger to which all institutions are exposed is that they are founded for the good of men, but as they become powerful they tend to exist primarily for their own good. Ease of organisation, order and regularity are what every institution inevitably aims at. It insensibly demands that men should take the form in which they can most easily be organised and dealt with. This is the danger which has always beset the Western Church. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the history of that Church is of a series of

struggles to keep it a humane institution. The central mechanism of the Church always tended to become abstract, to grow out of genuine contact with life. Great movements towards monasticism, and still more the simple methods of the Friars, brought it back again from time to time. But gradually the central mechanism laid its benumbing hand upon these reforming movements, and checked their vitality. As the fabric became more stately, it lost in effective power. When its organisation had been forged into apparently irrefragable strength, it was found to be intolerable.

This is a warning never to be forgotten. The mediæval Church fell, because it had ceased to influence human life through its excessive endeavours to accommodate itself to its needs; because it expanded its system to meet the requirements of feeble consciences, which grew feebler the more they were tended; because it undertook to do so much for men's souls, that men felt they were losing all consciousness that their souls were after all their own.

I call your attention to this because the question is so often raised, What happened in the history of the Church during the sixteenth century? And the answer differs according to the point of view of him who gives it. I do not think that we shall find the answer in the domain of theology. Indeed, theological considerations in themselves have rarely stirred the minds of multitudes. It more often happens, that theology supplies the needful basis for a new outlook on Christian truth, which has been rendered necessary by the results of God's government of the world.

This was eminently the case at the Reformation. The growth of knowledge and the development of national consciousness gave men a new sense of power and a new means of criticism. They demanded that the ecclesiastical system should be in accordance with their knowledge, and with the sense of responsibility for their own life and actions, which passing events forced upon them.

This is the general meaning of the Reformation movement; and on this basis it has been increasingly justified by events. It is a fact that those peoples which have built their life upon the conception of freedom, founded on individual responsibility in the sight of God, have shown a vigour in grappling with the problems of life, which the peoples who remained content with a system, which partially obscured that truth, have not been able to display.

I mention this because it is at the bottom of the interest taken by the English people in theological questions. They are not primarily interested in them from a strictly theological point of view; but they regard with suspicion any form of theological opinions which, they think, even remotely threatens that idea of freedom which they rightly hold dear. Their suspicions may, in particular points, be mere prejudices; they may sometimes be unreasonable. But they demand, that any ecclesiastical development should maintain clearly that sense of individual responsibility in the sight of God which was won by much toil, and has been preserved with many sacrifices. In so doing they inherit a feeling of antagonism to any system which has an opposite tendency. They are, it may

be, unreasonably sensitive on the point. Yet I should hesitate to call any uneasiness on such a vital matter unreasonable; and I do not think that any religious movement can have a chance of lasting success, which cannot or will not give effective guarantees on this important subject.

Now this consideration has a practical bearing which cannot be overlooked. The question which England had to settle in the sixteenth century was not merely whether or no its Church was to continue to recognise the Papal jurisdiction, but in what relation the system of the Church was to stand towards the aspirations of the national life So grave were the suspicions of the working of that system in the past, that some countries abandoned it altogether. This was not done in England. The system was retained in its integrity, freed only from noxious growths which disfigured its primitive characteristics. The object of this process of pruning was to reinstate the Church into its proper position as the trainer of national life — a position which it had well-nigh forfeited. The Church stated the position which it claimed, the teaching which it offered, and the nature of the ministrations which it provided. The State accepted that statement; and the general result of that offer and that acceptance was the recognition of a *concordat*, which is generally called the Reformation Settlement. The Prayer Book contains the Church's offer, the Acts of Uniformity contain the State's acceptance. This is expressed in the Ordination Service when every one who is ordained priest undertakes that he will "minister the Doctrine and

Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and Realm hath received the same, according to the Commandments of God".

There have been variations in the Prayer Book, and there have been variations in the Acts of Uniformity and in their application. These were made by the same authorities as agreed in the first instance to frame them. The object of the changes made in the Prayer Book was to secure the connexion of the ecclesiastical system with the legitimate aspirations of the national life, and make it the trainer of all that was best in that life. The end pursued was the creation of a deep-seated sense of individual responsibility for an individual life, fashioned in accordance with the Gospel of Christ. The appeal to primitive doctrine and practice was an appeal to a time before that in which external mechanism invaded the system of the Church. The system of the Primitive Church was framed for those who willingly accepted Christian truth, and wished to act together as became those who were called by the name of Christ. The mechanism of a later time came from the desire, inherent in all organisations, to produce by external means the outward appearance of a Christian life, without the inward conviction on which alone such a life can be based. From this error, which penetrated the system of the mediæval Church, our Church withdrew itself on to the solid ground of primitive practice at the Reformation. Its action, and the meaning of its action, have to be determined by reference to this primary object.

I have emphasised this obvious truth, partly because we do not sufficiently recognise how difficult this process was. It is always open to criticism in points of detail. Antiquity has a charm to many minds, especially when it can be viewed from a safe distance and is seen through a haze of sentiment. It is hard to distinguish between what upholds and what weakens the permanent elements of character, between truth and fancy, between what is necessary to explain the truth, and what fritters away its supreme claim on the intelligence as well as on the feelings. On the other hand, it is easy to attempt the impossible task of avoiding past dangers, by the apparently simple process of cutting oneself adrift from the past altogether, and hoping to remake human nature by starving its finer side out of existence. If the Church of England is sometimes spoken of disparagingly as a "Via Media," it is so only in the sense in which Aristotle defined virtue, as being a mean state between excess and defect. It is obvious that either excess or defect is easier than the maintenance of a just mean between tendencies which allure to one side or the other. Yet in this our probation lies in all things; and as members of a Church we have to admit this fact, no less than in the regulation of our individual lives. It is vain to strive and rid ourselves of this responsibility. From time to time we shall be exposed to opposite tendencies of opinion, each having much to urge on their behalf, each corresponding to a body of genuine feeling which demands our respect, and each containing some truth which is valuable, and must be absorbed when it has been reduced to proper proportion. Every

strong wave of feeling shows that there is a danger of something being forgotten. We must discover what that something is, and find a place for it and for the warning which it brings. This is a difficult task, and requires much patience. It is only possible by recognising the true temper of the Church of England, and holding to that as our guide.

The temper of individuals and institutions alike cannot be expressed in formal regulations, but is shown in the main object which it pursues and the methods by which it pursues it. The object of the Church of England is to train up its children to a sense of their responsibility as Christians, and to set forth Christian truth as something which must be apprehended from within, and must work out its fruits in a strong and steadfast character. It teaches God's truth, not man's fancies, however beautiful; it aims at developing conscience and setting it as supreme in guiding conduct. It may be said that all forms of Christian organisation claim to do the same. But their claims can to a large extent be judged by reason. A system may tend to teach men to believe in the Church, rather than in God's Revelation. It may be said that the Church is only the teacher of God's Word; but it makes a great deal of difference whether I am taught to believe in my teacher, or in the subject which he teaches. In secular matters this makes all the difference between a good and a bad method of education, between one which stimulates and one which dulls the intelligence. In the same way, all systems of discipline claim to train the conscience; but it makes all the difference whether

the conscience is trained to dependence on another, or to a growing sense of its own responsibility. Only the right temper, informed by a true knowledge of the end pursued, and strengthened by that Holy Spirit which alone gives a right judgment in all things, can achieve the right result. Some men, wishing to solve the difficulty at once, have tried to form ecclesiastical systems without definite teaching or discipline. They have only fallen into imperfect and personal methods of teaching, and an external or rigid discipline which has cramped and narrowed human nature. Again, we must be content to face ever-recurring problems by perpetual test and trial of passing tendencies, with reference to permanent principles.

I would apply these considerations to points of controversy which are of frequent recurrence. I have said that public interest is not in theological discussion, properly so called, but is in the maintenance of the spirit of liberty, which is felt to have its root in religion ; indeed, the test of religious systems is their power of producing fruits in individual character. It is felt that the system of the Church should not be suspected of deviating in any way from this purpose, or of falling back upon methods which were rejected because they failed to produce this result. When people talk of the "principles of the Reformation," they mean those changes in the mediæval system which made for liberty, and for the training of the individual to a sense of his responsibility in the sight of God. It is easy to find fault with the selection of those principles, to examine catch-words, and find little in them. But

these catch-words represent, after all, the deposit of a long period of thought. All controversies tend to run into details, to end in particular cries, to expend their energy on apparently trivial points. But behind these points, stands the principle with which we have to reckon. We must deal with the principle before we can deal safely with the cry invented to protect it. We may think that particular cry unworthy, or outworn; but it is a remnant of the past, deeply ingrained in many minds, and clad with a significance beyond what it expresses. If we think it wise to attempt to do away with it, we must act cautiously, and clearly show that we are safeguarding its meaning in an equally effective and less offensive way.

Now, recent controversy, after removing all that is incidental and trivial, practically is concerned with two matters, which were regarded as cardinal points in the system of our Church at the time of the Reformation. These points are—the restoration of the primitive conception of Holy Communion for the mediæval conception of the Mass, and the abolition of the disciplinary requirement of Confession as necessary before Communion. These were regarded as of vital importance in establishing that conception of spiritual freedom and of individual responsibility before God, on which the Christian character was to be founded. When we look back to the history of the past, and when we consider the needs of the present, we cannot wonder that Englishmen should think deeply and feel seriously on these two points.

In considering them, we must bear clearly in mind what the Reformers were trying to do. They aimed

at cutting off the existing abuses which kept the people in spiritual bondage, and at establishing their reformed system on a basis which would guard against the reintroduction of the temper from which those abuses sprung. Their reformed system had definitely to train the people of England to a clear conception of their spiritual position. It was inevitable that in the working of that system, the necessity of guarding against old errors should at first be of greatest importance. The activity of those who laboured chiefly for this purpose was for some time dominant, and what had been omitted was emphasised more strongly than what had been retained. The consequence was, that the complete working of the system of the Church of England was not a prominent object for some time; and it has never been the universal object of the energies of the whole Church. In the present century, this object was brought into prominence, and has been pursued with considerable success. This success has been looked upon with some suspicion, mainly because it has not sufficiently explained its object with reference to the general tendencies of national life. In consequence of this defect, there is still some confusion of thought between the system of the Prayer Book as it is laid down, and that system as it was imperfectly carried out under untoward circumstances. This is a matter which is being cleared up by discussion, and is a legitimate subject for careful explanation.

Such explanation involves a consideration of important questions, which require delicate handling. Chief amongst them is the question of the general sentiment

attaching to our services, about which people take different views, according as they regard them in reference to the sources from which they were derived, or in reference to the dominant sentiment of the sixteenth century, which emphasised the cutting off of old abuses. On the one hand, it is maintained that these abuses have disappeared before the general spread of intelligence, and that popular taste demands a growing appeal to feelings of dignity and reverence, which are taking their place more markedly in common life. On the other hand, it is maintained that the danger of drifting back to mechanical forms of religion is permanent, that anything which enlists the feelings is dangerous, and that nothing should even seem to interfere with the supreme demand on the intelligence of the worshipper. These are opposing lines of thought, which have always existed in the bosom of the Christian Church. In the best times they have served to regulate one another They correspond to differences of temperament. They will never disappear or be entirely reconciled. Every ecclesiastical system must make room for both. It is hopeless that one should struggle to oust the other.

Each, however, must be subject to the fundamental principles of the institution within which it claims to act. It must appeal to these principles and show its compatibility with them. The question of the admissibility of that appeal is capable of decision; and it is that question, and that question only, which the authorities of the Church have been attempting to decide. Public confidence has been shaken and serious suspicion aroused, by what seems in most

men's eyes to be an assertion, that there are no principles which claim men's allegiance on the ground that they have been received by this Church and realm; and consequently that every individual priest is free to select from ecclesiastical antiquity any rite or ceremony which he thinks fit, provided he applies it to the services of the Prayer Book, which may be rendered at his discretion. It is not unnatural that such a claim should cause universal disquiet; it is inevitable that it should be challenged; and it is impossible that it can be maintained.

In the light of these general considerations I shall discuss the two points which I have mentioned as being prominent in present controversy.

(1) The object of "turning the Mass into a Communion" was avowedly pursued by our Reformers in the later years of Henry VIII. When the first Prayer Book of Edward VI. was issued, it was at once felt that this was its aim. The resistance to it was based on that ground. There was a rising in the West, and the rebels clearly stated their wishes:—

"We will have the Mass in Latin, as it was before, and celebrated by the priest without any man or woman communicating with him.

"We will have the Sacrament hung over the high altar, and thus be worshipped as it was wont to be, and they which will not consent thereto, we will have them die like heretics against the holy Catholic faith.

"We will have the Sacrament of the altar but at Easter delivered to the people, and then but in one kind."[1]

[1] Strype, *Memorials of Cranmer*, 1848, ii., 517, etc.

This expresses a clear and definite system. The Mass was a propitiatory sacrifice offered on their behalf by the priest, who was not to be interfered with by the laity in this, his chief duty; the efficacy of this propitiation was to be maintained by perpetual reservation, and the ordinary form of religious observance was to be the worship of the Sacrament; the priest was always to be in a condition to make his Communion, while the laity were not to do so except once a year. This was the system which, with all that it involved, the Reformers had to face. Writers about the history of the Reformation, especially modern controversialists, perpetually make the mistake of shutting their eyes to the actual facts of the popular religious life, and take the statements of accredited theologians as representing the contents of the system which was overthrown. Cranmer's answer to the rebels was to refer them to the regulations which they professed to follow:—

"The very words of the Mass, as it is called, show plainly that it was ordained not only for the priest, but for others also to communicate with the priest. For in the very canon which they so much extol, and which is so holy that no man may know what it is—and therefore it is read so softly that no man can hear it—in that same canon, I say, is a prayer containing this: that 'not only the priest, but also as many beside as communicate with him, may be fulfilled with grace and heavenly benediction'. How agreeth this prayer with your article, wherein you say that neither man nor woman shall communicate with the priest?"[1]

[1] Strype, *Memorials of Cranmer*, 1848, ii., 523.

I quote this as a practical illustration of the entire corruption of the intent and meaning of the services of the Church by the exigencies of popular devotion, which strove to limit its obligation to personal attendance at a service where something was understood to be done by a priest, on behalf of those present, without any need of their participation.

With this view of the meaning and efficacy of the Mass went the abuses of "private Masses, and sacrifices of Masses," and the like. All hung together, as part of a system which could only be rooted out by going back to the custom of primitive times, and again "turning the Mass into a Communion". The real reason for the changes made in the second Prayer Book of Edward VI. was a doubt if the first Prayer Book had adequately succeeded in this object. On this ground it was thought wise to drop the word Mass in the second Book. For the same reason the Articles of 1553 laid down that "the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or sin, were forged fables and dangerous deceits" (*figmenta et perniciosae imposturae*). Again I would quote Cranmer's words in explanation:—

"Because without thanksgiving the remembrance of the death of Christ is not duly accomplished, men of old called this conception of the Sacrament the Eucharist; and some orthodox Fathers called it also a Sacrifice, because it is made in memory of that one Sacrifice once for all accomplished, not because the doing of it is in itself applicable to the quick and the dead for the remission of sins. That is a papistic fig-

ment; and because from this impious opinion, and the gain accruing therefrom, private Masses, for the most part offered in satisfaction, have so mightily grown—of which we find no mention in more ancient writers—we judge that all Masses in satisfaction (of pain and guilt) should be entirely abolished." [1]

I need not further pursue the manifest intention of our Prayer Book in this matter. It dealt with a people in whom the sense of Communion had been almost obliterated by a vicious and un-Catholic system. It had to train them to a sense of their Christian privileges and their Christian responsibility towards the means of grace which their Lord in His infinite loving-kindness had bequeathed to them. Solemn words are put into the mouth of the priest to address his people: "I bid you in the name of God; I call you in Christ's behalf; I exhort you as ye love your own salvation, that ye will be partakers of this Holy Communion".

This is the object which the Church of England ever pursued, to make the Holy Communion a service for the people, to which they came prepared to receive the gifts of grace in the way which Jesus had appointed. Our own time has seen a fuller accomplishment of that object than any previous period has witnessed. The Holy Communion is more frequently and more reverently celebrated and administered; there is a higher sense of its value, a greater recognition of its supreme importance in the services of the Church. It is greatly to be regretted that this advance towards the due appreciation of the mind of the Church, should be checked

[1] Cranmer, *Miscellaneous Writings*, 1846, p. 482.

by anything which even remotely suggests a desire to return to that conception of the Holy Communion which was so pernicious. It was that conception which in the sixteenth century was denoted by the use of the term Mass. Of course, it may be said that there is nothing in a name; but when a word is associated with a long-standing controversy, it is a great mistake to attempt to revive it. Words gain a significance which cannot be removed. The revival of a word inevitably creates suspicions that what it has long been held to signify is being revived also. Few things have done more mischief than the needless use of this word, partly from a modern tendency towards brevity, but more from a desire to obliterate old distinctions, and to restore unity by agreement in words when there was no corresponding agreement in the thing signified. The same desire has led to an antiquarian revival of many of the accompaniments of the Communion Service, which had been discarded as not directly appropriate to its true meaning.

It would take me a long time to discuss these even briefly; and I do not think that the time has arrived when this can profitably be done in detail. The point I wish to emphasise is, that the object of the Church of England at the Reformation was "to turn the Mass into a Communion". The question of the methods to be adopted in rendering the service must be dominated by a regard to that intention. If that intention be loyally respected, there is a basis on which all other points can be settled. But so long as even a very few act in such a manner as to raise doubts about the ultimate end to which, I will not say their own inten-

tions, but their methods inevitably tend, it is difficult to find a basis for discussion. A Choral Celebration of Holy Communion, announced as a "Sung Mass," or sometimes a "Missa Cantata," with no one to communicate with the priest, Sunday after Sunday, certainly seems to set aside the system of the Church of England. It is this which creates suspicion, and puts a hindrance in the way of many who are honestly trying, in various ways, to adapt the services of the Church to the changed circumstances of modern life.

How much these circumstances have changed is seldom appreciated; and it must be remembered that any archæological revival must take into account all the changes which have affected the life of the people. This is a principle of large application. I would apply it to one point where it is not sufficiently considered: I mean the matter of the ancient rule of receiving the Holy Communion fasting. This now means a reception early in the morning. We have adopted the habit of taking food more frequently and less at a time than our ancestors. I imagine that in this we have acted wisely for our physical well-being. But if we set up an ancient rule as universally binding on this point, we forget its relation to the facts of the life of those for whom it was framed. I will not go back beyond the sixteenth century; but I will quote a writer of the time, who says: "Ech one in maner (except here and there some young hungrie stomach that cannot fast till dinner time) contenteth himself with dinner and supper onlie".[1] The hours of these meals were, for gentlefolk eleven and five, for mer-

[1] Harrison, *Description of England*, Book iv., chap. vi.

chants twelve and six, for husbandmen twelve and seven or eight. In a time when borrowed light was expensive and bad, every one went to bed early and rose at dawn. Churchgoing on Sunday mornings was before the midday meal. Mattins, as well as Holy Communion, were attended fasting, and stood on the same level in that respect as most of the business of ordinary days.

This may seem a trivial point; but you will find it well, in considering ecclesiastical rules, to employ the same method as you would employ in considering any other rules. They were made in the first instance from reasonable motives, which had reference to prevailing conditions. They have to be interpreted with reference to those facts, if they are to be of value. By calling a custom a "Catholic custom" you do not exempt it from the necessity of reasonable explanation. Customs were framed as helps, not as hindrances; they were not meant to be burdens to generations whose habits of life had changed. This is a point for consideration, because the desire to revive this custom as an absolute law, binding on every one, runs counter to the desire to give the service of Holy Communion the same dignified accompaniments as generally attend Morning Prayer. If there are to be no communicants at midday on the ground of this custom, then it is difficult to avoid something which looks perilously like "turning the Communion into Mass".

I mention this as a matter which needs consideration. It is an illustration of the way in which difficulties arise, and will continue to be difficulties unless they are faced with reference to general principles.

The indisposition to do so constitutes our real danger. It is a common cry that the Church of England is so fettered by Acts of Parliament, rigorously interpreted, that it cannot develop at will. In the face of facts this can hardly be maintained. The change that has come over the mode of conducting the services of the Church during the last fifty years has been enormous. Those changes have won their way, because they have made the services themselves more intelligible, and have adapted them to the changed conditions of taste and knowledge. Of course, no change was made without some remonstrance on the part of some; but the law of development has steadily prevailed. This law of development, however, means making explicit what was implicit in the service. It does not mean altering the service into something else. It must be governed by the contents of what it professes to explain, and must formulate its claims with reference to those contents only.

(2) The other point, which has been prominent in recent controversy, is the subject of Confession. It cannot be said that this was a matter of grave concern in the sixteenth century, despite the manifold abuses to which the system had been subject. It was regarded as a matter to be decided, not so much on theological grounds as on grounds of common sense. That some persons should require help in quieting their consciences, and should wish for an assurance of God's forgiveness, was regarded as consonant both to the facts of human nature and to the office of a minister of Christ. But that this process should be imposed as a discipline by the Church, or urged upon

individuals as a necessary preliminary for receiving the Holy Sacrament, was regarded as contrary to Christian liberty. I need go no further than quote the words of Bishop Jewel, who sums up the position of the Church of England :—

"Three kinds of confession are expressed unto us in the Scriptures: the first, made secretly to God alone; the second, openly before the whole congregation; the third, privately unto our brother. Of the two former kinds there is no question. Touching the third, if it be discreetly used, to the greater comfort and better satisfaction of the penitent, without superstition or other ill, it is not in anywise by us reproved. The abuses and errors set apart, we do no more mislike a private confession than a private sermon. This much only we say, that private confession to be made unto the minister is neither commanded by Christ nor necessary to salvation. . . . But you say, 'St. Chrysostom saith, "Our priests have power utterly to cleanse the filth of the soul".' And who saith otherwise? When we consecrate priests, we pronounce Christ's words over them: 'Whose sins you do forgive, they are forgiven'. But are sins forgiven only by private confession? If so, how happened it that there were no private confessions used in the Church of Constantinople during the whole time that St. Chrysostom was bishop there?"[1]

Our Reformers had no fear of Englishmen again becoming priest-ridden; and for my own part I share their entire confidence. The first Prayer Book placed

[1] *Defence of the Apology*. Jewel's Works. Parker Society, 1848. Pp. 351-2.

confession to Almighty God as the first duty incumbent on all who came to receive the Holy Sacrament. If any one's conscience was troubled and grieved, so that he lacked comfort, he was advised to go to a priest. The exhortation continued :—

"Requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession, not to be offended with them that do use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret confession to the priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to God, and the general confession to the Church. But in all things to follow and keep the rule of charity, and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences; where as he hath no warrant of God's Word to the same."[1]

These words were omitted from the exhortation in the second Prayer Book, most probably because it was felt that they were appropriate to a period of transition, but were not necessary permanently. But the last clause, bidding every man "to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences, where as he hath no warrant in God's Word for the same," contains a precious indication of the temper of the Church of England, its fairness in maintaining Christian liberty, and its recognition of that fairness as being the very atmosphere of God's Word.

The position of the Church of England is: that

[1] *Liturgies of Edward VI.*: Parker Society, p. 82.

confession is left to every man's discretion. It is not to be enjoined, still less to be enforced by the clergy. Every one is advised to try and quiet his own conscience first, and if he needs further help, he may seek it at his own responsibility. No man can judge of the needs of another's conscience. He may have his own opinion about his wisdom, and he may use his influence or give his advice; but he may not judge another's mind or conscience. It is his own, and he must accept the responsibility for its keeping.

Loyalty to the principles of the Church of England requires that this liberty should be respected on all hands. The Church does not impose confession as a discipline: it recommends, in the first place, confession to Almighty God; it reserves private confession for cases where a man is unable to quiet his own conscience. No teaching should be given by the clergy which does not state all these facts. Disquietude has been caused by a belief that habitual confession is urged by some as a practice necessary for the highest form of the Christian life, and as in itself a desirable means for the formation of character. This is in no way the teaching of the Church of England. The normal character is to be formed by a quiet and consistent walk with God, according to the dictates of a conscience trained to constant openness before Him. Serious lapses into sin, the consciousness of evil habits which have formed a fetter, the awakening of remorse for sins which have long been concealed—about these and such-like things counsel and comfort may be sought according to the wish of him who seeks

it. But this does not justify a recommendation of confession, particularly to the young, still less the attempt to impose it as a preliminary for Confirmation, or to require it before partaking of Holy Communion. It is not a matter to be urged on the young or the impressionable, but is to be left to the discretion of those whose minds are mature.

There can be little doubt that the practice of confession has grown of late years; and I think it behoves those who view this increase with alarm to investigate the causes, and try to supply a remedy. Clerical influence on the part of a few does not sufficiently account for it. I think that it arises from two features in the modern life of great populations, which call for serious attention. One is the increasing pressure of a sense of bustle and hurry, which creates a feeling of personal helplessness. The mechanism of life is so powerful; there is so little room for quiet and reflection, that many people, who wish to escape the power of the world, find it easiest to do so by providing definite refuges for the purpose. This is to be met by adapting the teaching given in sermons to the actual needs of human life. Private confession is frequently prompted by a desire to supply the lack of personal help, which is felt in the general teaching given in our churches. A second cause is the decline in parental authority, which largely proceeds from the decay of family religion. This I know comes from many causes; but it is absolutely necessary to replace it by all possible means. Without family worship, regularly conducted, without a sense of public worship attended by the members of a family united for that

purpose, we lose the basis necessary for the parental guidance in matters of personal religion. If parents claim their children's confidence they must deserve it. A clergyman's task, be he never so discreet, is made very difficult when he finds that he cannot refer the questions of the young to the decision of their parents, with any expectation that they will be seriously answered.

There are points concerning the changing tendencies of modern life on which, personally, I should prefer to address you at length, rather than speak on these matters of lesser importance. But it is unfortunately easier for human activity to busy itself with small questions of organisation than to face real problems. It is easy to pursue a system and frame small regulations: it is difficult to follow out their real influence. It is the defect of all systems that, in proportion as they are developed to perfection, it is found that people have moved away from their control. It is easy for a diligent and hardworking clergyman, to mistake the enthusiasm of a small and select body who gather round him, for the beginnings of a popular movement. There is a danger in the natural desire to form a band of devoted adherents. We have to learn, as life goes on, to beware of trusting to our natural gifts, to our personal influence, to the impression made by devoted and self-sacrificing work. We have to guard against the fallacious impression produced on our minds by our own best qualities. We are ministers of God and of His Church. Our work is to lead men to rise to a consciousness of their rightful position as children of God and members of Christ's Church—of Christ's Church, not any narrow

form of it, not our own Church in which we minister. It is a confession of failure on our part, if small points in our way of conducting the services of the Church should seem to be of such vital importance, that any change in them is felt to be a disturbance to devotion. There are phrases in use, about "privileges which we have enjoyed for so many years," which I prefer to regard as mere phrases, containing no real truth of heart and spirit.

I have spoken to you about the great note of the Church of England — to teach the people of this country the Catholic Faith, with the directness and simplicity with which the faith was taught in primitive times, when the appeal was made to the conscience and intelligence of the body of believers. If this dominant note be admitted frankly and unreservedly, there would be little discussion about details. If the spirit and temper of the Church be observed, we have the whole history and antiquities of the Christian Church to use for our edification. But we can only use them in the spirit of freedom, with reference to the principles of our Church, and in accordance with the work which we have to do for the English people. There have been times when the Church of England failed to understand fully its own principles, when it was too insular, too suspicious of the great heritage of the past. This is not to be redressed by a sudden revival of antiquarianism, which disregards English traditions and slights the principles of the English Church. There is much to be done in the way of stating these principles to the full, and acting loyally in accordance with them.

I have been speaking about the temper and spirit of the Church. This is not to be found in small regulations. It cannot be so expressed ; nor can its system be enforced in reference to points of detail only. There are some points, at a time when appeal is being made to the letter of the Prayer Book, to which I feel it right to direct your attention.

There can be no reasonable doubt, that the system of the Church contemplated, that the service of Morning and Evening Prayer should be said daily in every church. The words of the rubric are clear about the intention with which it was framed. "The curate that ministereth in every parish church or chapel, being at home and not being otherwise reasonably hindered, shall say the same in the parish church or chapel where he ministereth." The rubric was drawn up at a time when more than one minister in a parish church was practically unknown. The order could not be made absolute, as he might be away. Moreover, the ordinary parish contemplated by the framers of this rubric was of large extent, and duty might call the priest to some distant part at the accustomed hour of service. There might be hindrances occasioned by the nature of his necessary work. The order, therefore, was not made absolute, and consequently cannot be enforced. But it was assuredly not contemplated that the trouble of opening the church, the small number of people who could be expected to come, the opinion of the individual clergyman that he could spend his time more profitably, or such-like things would be taken to be reasonable hindrances. The intention clearly was that the daily worship of Al-

mighty God in every parish should be a continual testimony of the Divine presence, and of the supreme claim of God to the devotion of all men. The tolling of the bell was to be a sign and token, a solemn reminder of what some were doing made to others who might be unable to be present. No multiplicity of meetings, or means of attracting divers classes of the community, can make up for the diminution of that solemn testimony. The universal adoption in every church of this plain direction of the Prayer Book, would do more to bring us all together in a proper understanding of our common duty than anything else. It would be a blessing to the spiritual life of the clergy; it would be a setting forth of the duty of prayer more valuable than occasional exhortations, however forcible; it would emphasise the source and object of all other activity; it would train many people to a higher conception of devotional life. Our appeals, even in spiritual matters, are often too purely utilitarian. We judge too hastily of what is the most useful way in which we think that we individually can work. We forget too readily the force of the consistent maintenance of an ideal. The sound of the church bells summoning to daily prayer, the clergyman's withdrawal from other work that he may pray, the sight of his regular walk to church at the appointed hours—these, if universal, would be a continual lesson, a perpetual sermon, which would touch many hearts, and would steadily grow in power and effectiveness.

Again, it is laid down in a rubric that "the curate shall declare unto the people what holy days or fasting days are in the week following to be observed". This

is not always done, though it is clearly meant to be part of the system of the Church's teaching. The number of such fasts and festivals was carefully arranged, so as to lay no impossible burden on any one. The doctrines of the Holy Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints, are set forth by reference to the Apostolic founders of the Church. The many lessons to be learned from them should not be forgotten. When notice is given of days to be observed, and a Collect, Epistle and Gospel is provided for them, it is obvious that such observance was intended to include a celebration of the Holy Communion. Again I say we should gain enormously if the system of the Church was carried out in its entirety. We cannot drop any part of it without a loss to ourselves and to our people. Loyalty to the Church demands that we should scrupulously observe the intention of its commands.

Again, the recitation of the Athanasian Creed is ordered on certain festivals. It is not said in all churches. Certainly, loyalty to the Prayer Book demands that it should be said as appointed. If a time of controversy has any lessons to teach us, scrupulous fairness should be one of them. The standard to which all fair-minded men appeal is the standard of the Prayer Book, honestly interpreted and loyally obeyed. There is a natural tendency for every one to think that his own deviations are obviously excellent, and are necessary adaptations to popular needs. We see that danger begins when each man undertakes to judge his own cause, and dispenses himself from the need of too strict obedience. The

answer must be the same to all. There are lawful and constitutional means of raising questions and proposing amendments. Such means are an appeal to the voice of the Church, which is to be sought for in appointed ways, and not assumed by each one according to his own preference. There are many points on which the wishes of the clergy and the congregation may have free power of choice; but such points must not affect the system and the principles of the Church. These must be free from danger; and the more active we are, the more ready to try experiments, the more necessary it becomes that we should submit our experiments willingly to authority, being conscious of the danger of rashness, of the insidious development of unwholesome tendencies, of the temptation of being engrossed in our own immediate sphere—to the disregard of the claims of unity and of the maintenance of Catholic truth in its purity. When we consider the importance of the work entrusted to us, what earnest-minded man would wish indefinitely to increase his responsibility? Who would not wish to have his sphere curtailed for him, knowing its real vastness? Who would not welcome control to set limits to his own individual temper, to preserve him from hot-headed counsellors, to give him that sobriety and that sense of order which are necessary for the minister of Christ? We need to be saved from conflicts of passing opinion; we do not need to court them. The world with its passionate cries, which change from day to day, is surging around us. Let us beware lest we echo those cries. Let us labour to keep ourselves unspotted by the world. It is our

duty to deliver our message in tones which are sympathetic to all the highest knowledge, the noblest thought, and the loftiest aspirations of our time. We fail in this entirely if we lose ourselves in questions of mechanism, if we waste our strength over trivialities, if we apply our minds to profitless pedantry. The forces that are moulding England, are not expressed by those who are deeply interested in maintaining that it is desirable to use incense in our services; nor are they expressed by those, who are interested in maintaining that such a use is not desirable. They are expressed by that silent multitude who are amazed that, with so many problems before us, so much energy and effort should be expended on such a question at all. We must get back into connexion with realities. We must face the needs of men's souls.

I know that these needs are not forgotten, even when controversy waxes high. But we must not only do our work—we must be recognised as doing it, and as doing it in the right temper. No sacrifice is too great for this purpose. Let us be men enough to agree. There is only one possible basis of agreement—the frank acceptance of the historic position of the Church of England, based on a recognition of its great possibilities in the future.

This is the one thing which I have had in mind in what I have said to you. If I have not made my meaning clear, I am willing to explain it further to any one. I am willing to advise you on any points which you may bring before me. My desire is for the greatest freedom possible: but freedom can only be maintained in reference to intelligible principles.

My brothers, we have much work to do for our country and we have much to learn before we do it rightly Much has happened lately that has given us all great food for reflection. Surely we have felt the meaning of our national life more clearly than we ever did before—its meaning not only to ourselves, but to the world. Our reflections have not led to much if they have not convinced us of the part which the Church of England is called upon to play in the training of the English character. Other forms of religious organisation only too faithfully represent that character as it is, and have no sufficient basis from which they can broaden it and enlarge its sympathies. This is our special work. It cannot be done in haste. The old lines of national development must be carefully followed. I recognise the germs of a noble aspiration in attempts to break down England's insularity by schemes for the corporate reunion of Christendom. It is an object which we all pray for, that God would heal all our divisions and make us one. But plans for structural unity hinder that unity of spirit which must come first. They repel many more than they attract. Outward forms are but coverings; charity grows from within. The great hindrance to the growth of charity is want of confidence in one another's intentions.

You have much work to do. You are doing it bravely and well in your several spheres. But the call of a time like the present to each of us is to rise above our personal aims, our individual work, our private preferences, and face the great issues of the future of our Church and nation. It behoves us all

to think and pray our self away, and try to discern God's good pleasure. We are not only messengers and stewards, we are also the watchmen of the Lord. I feel profoundly how great a responsibility, how heavy a strain is cast upon us of this generation. Shall we not bear it? If we are to do so, we must be prepared to sacrifice our personal wishes, to repress our excessive individualism, to set an example of combined action for the common good, to use the abundant means which God has put into our hands for the work which He day by day reveals to us more and more. With the cry sounding in our ears, "Arise, shine," how can we waste time by disputing about the shape of our lanterns?

My brothers, I have spoken. God grant that what I have said may lead us to a deeper sense of the greatness of our mission. We are God's ministers, and our strength comes from God. Let us seek it where alone it is to be found, looking "not at things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal". Therefore "be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live at peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you".

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, LONDON DIOCESAN CONFERENCE, 1900.[1]

My Lords and Gentlemen,—First of all I have to bid you welcome to this Conference, and to thank you for the welcome that you have given me. I cannot but look back to the time when I first met you three years ago, and I can assure you that I remember very keenly the feelings of shyness and awkwardness which were then in my mind. I can only say that every year since then, I have felt more at home in meeting the clergy and laity of my Diocese, and I hope that now we have reached a period when at all events we thoroughly understand one another, and when we are prepared to work together in a spirit of mutual confidence.

But after welcoming you, I must confess that I feel some difficulty how to proceed. This Conference is a Conference for you and not for me. I am here that I may listen to your opinions, rather than that I may give you mine. Unfortunately for me, since we last met I have had only too many opportunities for airing my own opinions. First of all the Church Congress, and afterwards my Charge at my Visitation, have given me opportunities for saying, perhaps many of you will think, more than all that was to be said;

[1] This address was delivered extempore, and is printed from the reporter's notes.

and therefore I do not propose to trouble you very much to-day with any utterance of my own. But as I look through the Agenda I would congratulate you very earnestly upon the number of important questions that have been selected for discussion; and I would venture to say also that they show a very practical spirit, and a very great desire to make the Church in London as efficient as it can be made by our deliberations. There is one matter on the Agenda which I think is of primary importance; I mean the proposal that there should be a Conference held about the points in dispute, which have unfortunately rent us asunder for some time past. Unco-ordinated controversy always has evils of its own, each side tending to make its assertions stronger and stronger, and it is only possible to come to an agreement when the two parties meet face to face.

It is quite true that controversy is deplorable; but it is equally true, when we regard the constitution of the human mind, that when questions are raised there should at all events be some approximate solution arrived at. Of course the solution must always be approximate. We constantly fall into the mistake of thinking that, because there is a problem, there must be an answer; that because a question is raised it has to be settled. But as we regard the history of mankind we see that, unfortunately or fortunately, as the case may be, very few questions have ever been settled, and they certainly never have been settled in history in the way in which either side wished them to be settled. The operation of general causes tends to be more powerful in settling questions

than the activities of those who are engaged on either side.

Controversies will arise; and what we have to discover is the practical point which is embodied in them. There is one practical point which it is eminently necessary to consider; and that is, what are the limits within which any definite system is workable? This, I take it, is the question to the solution of which we want to obtain an answer. The system of the Church of England must at all events be so definite and so clear that it is somehow or other workable, and the main question at present is, whether or not there are divergences from a central system so large as to threaten, at all events, to make that system unworkable. The chief object of any discussion or any conference upon the subject must be to try to discover a workable basis for the great system of the Church of England.

It will be well to remember in considering the object of such a Conference, how largely we are influenced by the operation of our political system. Now, of course, we all know that the system of our constitution is the finest thing that the world has ever seen. But in the working out of that system, as it is expressed in human language, we must admit that there is a great deal of difference between the process of saying and the process of doing. I mean to say that, every time that a general election comes on, we find each party quite convinced—in public, at all events—that the success of the other party would mean the entire destruction of England's greatness, and the dragging of all her glory through the mire. The

language that is used always has reference to the farthest possible issue which could be at stake. And yet, somehow or other, when the election is over and we settle down again to business, whichever side wins, we feel that more or less we can get our own way and live comfortably under our Government.

That is our working system in politics, and I am afraid that when any discussion arises it always tends to follow the same lines. First of all, everything is said to be at stake. There are the mightiest issues depending upon every conflict. The smallest point which is called into question is made to involve all sorts of things in the future; and the language that is used follows, I am sorry to say, in religious matters, simply and solely the example of current politics. We have the opinions of two parties expressed, who are trying to discover how much they can say against each other. But there has to come a time when somehow or other this mass of talk is brought to some definite decision; that is to say, when electioneering speeches have to be decided at the poll. It is difficult in our controversies to find exactly what the poll is, or what is the definite criterion that has to settle this vast amount of talk, and we have to try to discover for ourselves how that issue can be reached.

I hope that this proposed Conference, if it is carried out, will really mark that such a period has been reached—that it will mean that men are resolved to talk out by themselves, as Englishmen can talk out, the questions at issue, till they discover what are the

clear lines that separate them, and what is the real value of the principles which are at stake on either side. The advantages of such a Conference seem to me to be manifold, and I would venture to point out to you briefly some of the methods which I think should necessarily be followed.

First of all, we should remember how much we learn about opinions and the nature of opinions when we see them embodied, not in a series of abstract statements on paper, but in the lives and characters of our fellow-men. After all this is the test to which all opinions have ultimately to be brought. When men meet and when they discuss, the abstractness of the opinions tends to disappear; the angles somehow or other get rubbed off, and things which seem perfectly remote from our minds, when we read them simply as so many propositions, become more tolerable to us when we see them expressed in the form of flesh and blood, and clad with the sympathy which one human soul always carries to another.

There is another point which a Conference always, I think, will tend to illuminate. It is the definition and appreciation of catchwords. Controversy ranges for a long time round words which we suppose everybody understands, but to which, as a matter of fact, we find that people tend to attach different meanings. It is the repetition of catchwords, which are not defined, that tends to give vitality to a controversy. A little definition rapidly dispels a great many apparently irreconcilable differences of opinion.

Further we always tend to find, I think, in friendly conference, exhibitions of that great truth, that prin-

clipes after all can be held in very different forms. We see the meaning of the truth that there are diversities of gifts, ministrations, workings, but the same Spirit, the same Lord, the same God. We tend to feel that other people really are thinking very much what we think ourselves, although it happens that they express their opinions in forms which seem, at first sight, to be widely remote from our own.

There is another great truth which we have to learn continually in all affairs—namely, that the associations of the past, however strong they may seem to be, are by no means permanent; that outward forms do not necessarily carry in every generation the same meaning; that, on the contrary, they most decidedly do not; that there is something in the spirit of men which works through forms, whatever those forms may be, and is continually giving them new meaning, and is continually adjusting and adapting them to its own purposes of expression. However much outward things may remain the same, the inward movement of the mind of man is always going on its own lines, and is not to be confined within either formulæ on the one side, or forms on the other.

And we discover also, through conference with those who differ from us, that the progress of the human mind through the ages has always been a progress into a larger, a higher, a nobler and a purer spirit, and that it is the progress of the spirit of man which really directs, dictates and arranges everything else. As that spirit grows, old and new alike become changed, and each of them renders its own private service to that great eternal progress which is, after

all, the dominant characteristic of such a body as the Church of Christ.

When we look back upon the history of our Church, we see that that Church somehow or other seems to have constantly courted disruption. It is the great fault that can be brought against the Church of England, that it has shown a very decided reluctance to make room for new exhibitions of the working of spiritual powers. It is to that, unfortunately, that we owe so much Nonconformity as exists at present. The Church of England has in the past been too satisfied with its system, and too reluctant to see that system either changed or explained so as to meet the altering circumstances of the time. It is quite possible to have as an ideal of a Church, that it should present an appearance of inexpugnable greatness on every side. That is an ideal which has attractions to many people's minds. It is the ideal which, as a matter of fact, the Church of England pursued in the past. It was always struggling to keep its system clear and beyond dispute, and those who found fault with its system, had after various struggles, time after time, to go outside the Church and create a system of their own. We may or may not pride ourselves upon that result. I quite admit that it is a question about which people may have widely different opinions; but I would express my own, and my own is that I am very sorry indeed for every departure that was ever made from the Church of England in this country, and that I would have wished that those, who regulated the destinies of the Church at each of such crises, should have made many more concessions than they

did, and should have been even willing, if it were necessary, for a time to depart from the assertion of principles which were of great importance, trusting that those principles, if they really were as important as they appeared, would have reasserted themselves in view of the experience of the coming time ; because we can always recover things, and, if things are eternally true, then the eternal truth must inevitably prevail. But, unfortunately, in my opinion, we have seen in the history of the Church of England a system desperately maintaining itself in its integrity and allowing consequently the growth of a number of bodies outside, whom it made very little attempt to conciliate. An important question for us at the present day to keep clearly before our minds is, whether or not, with the experience of the past before us, we now seriously think that that is the ideal which we ought still to pursue. Remember, we are not dealing and cannot deal with the abstract conception of a Church, but we have to deal always with the exact nature of the English people who are committed to our charge. We cannot coerce them ; we cannot always bring them into the shape that we would wish.

How are we to deal with them? My own answer would be that we are to make the best that we can of them, asserting all the truth that we can get them to maintain, believing that, if they are rightly and truly dealt with, they will be led into the proper way in the long run. But they will not be led, I think, into any way by the blank assertion of the greatness and dignity of any particular system, which does not stoop to explain itself to them, and which does not do its

utmost to find room for all their diverging tendencies, however great they may be.

The question comes to this—cannot we better deal with the diverging tendencies which we object to, which we hope to overcome, and which we want to see put straight, by retaining them within the system of the Church and thereby subjecting them to the growing spiritual experience of the whole body? It is better to deal with difficulties and divergencies within one system than to drive them outside and insist that, for the purpose of clearness and definition, everybody should be put into the ideal place, which we each one of us are prepared to assign to him. After all what is a man's position? That which we think he ought to have, or that which he himself says he has? On the whole we must allow him to be the judge. And I therefore particularly dislike much of the language that has been used in recent controversy, which draws a line between those who are loyal to the Church of England and those who are disloyal to the Church of England. Do we really suppose that there is any test of loyalty, except a man's own internal consciousness of it? Are we ourselves prepared, in accordance with our own definitions and our own arguments, to assign to everybody exactly the proper place to which he ought to go? I am afraid that every man's position is that which he himself chooses to take. In fact, I do not see how, in accordance with our English way of looking at things, we can maintain anything else; we must make the best that we can of individuals or bodies of individuals, not from the point of view of what we think they

ought to do, or of where we think they ought to go, or of how we think they ought to stand, but of how they themselves think they ought to stand and where they think they ought to be.

It is clear that the difficulties that have arisen—particularly the difficulties that have arisen lately—have arisen from the want of a greater body of representative opinion to help in the government of the Church. I am glad to see that a resolution bearing upon that point is to be submitted to this Conference. Our institutions in England have during this century become entirely representative in almost every point, and it has been the weakness of the Church that the Church is not helped in its work by any body of directly representative opinion. It is, of course, perfectly true that the Church retains its old constitution and its old organisation; but in all other bodies —in Parliamentary, municipal and local government of every kind and sort—a change has been made to a more directly and completely representative basis. In the Church no corresponding change has been made. Of course the Church has progressed. Of course the Church has changed. All institutions must progress and change particularly in this country. There have been very great changes made, not only in the life, but in the representation of the life of the Church. The Church has changed very vastly in the present century; but how has it changed? Partly by adaptation and partly by a tacit agreement that certain things should be allowed to become obsolete. And therein really lies the great difficulty. It is, of course, perfectly possible to progress by allowing old regula-

tions to become obsolete, if there is an entire concurrence upon the point. But when there is not an entire concurrence upon the point, when questions are raised, then, of course, comes a very great difficulty. Many of the original rules regulating the services and the conduct of the services of the Church, have been allowed by common consent to become obsolete. But that process is sometimes challenged in particular points; and when it is so challenged, it cannot be settled at present, by a reference to a body which can really claim to represent the mind of the Church, and can really seek to discuss fairly the questions which are at issue; but it can only be settled by reference to law. Strictly legal decisions are not a satisfactory means of settling such questions. They always necessarily leave behind them a sense of their inadequacy. I do not think that those who are not lawyers, perhaps, sufficiently estimate how unsatisfactory legal decisions are in the eyes of those who give them. A judge, before he gives a decision, has to carefully whittle away as much as he can of the importance of the point at issue. He is settling a question between one person and another. He cannot settle a principle except inferentially. His decision has to be upon a fact, and that fact has to be made as narrow as possible, and that fact, of course, is a fact regarding the life or the conduct of a particular individual. It is perfectly true that you may infer from the decision when it is given, as much as you like; but in the eyes of the judge who gives it, it means only that a particular thing done by a particular person on a particular day under particular circumstances was not justified in the law.

I am afraid that no mass of legal decisions given in such a way can really be expected to carry a quite conclusive weight to the minds of a great number of persons. That practically is the result which we have seen of the legal decisions of the past. If Convocation had been a really representative body—I mean a body in which the clergy were represented more largely and more justly, and in which the laity were also represented and associated with the clergy, and if the Convocations had sat, not in their separate Provinces as they do at present, but combined for the purposes of discussion—we could have had questions dealt with as they arose. For remember that we are now dealing with questions which have arisen by degrees during a long period of years, and if we had had this large body of opinion organised in a proper way, we could have had the various steps in the formation of opinion discussed in public, tabulated, looked into and arranged by mutual consent upon a basis which I think would have saved us from the apparently abrupt divergences with which we are now face to face.

I think that these considerations go far to show the real need of reform in the representative system of the Church. At present the government of the Church is supposed to be monarchical, but such a form is not possible in practice in the England of to-day. I am afraid that I smile constantly when I open my letters and find myself earnestly entreated to suppress or put down immediately by return of post particular things and particular persons, or to remove them elsewhere. I am surprised at the readiness which, I am sorry to say, seems to exist in the minds of some people to

reinstate the Inquisition and to clothe the Bishop of London with the powers of Inquisitor-General. I can only say that I do not believe in the Inquisition, and that there is no post which I would less willingly occupy than that of Inquisitor.

I would dismiss you to your deliberations with the fervent hope that our animating object may be to see how we can work for the great purpose of the salvation of mankind which God has entrusted to us. If our hearts be set upon this end, He will give us that wisdom and that right judgment in all things, which is the special gift of His Holy Spirit. Let us approach our deliberations not wedded to our own opinions, or to our own special ways of envisaging or applying the truth of God, however dear or however necessary they may be to ourselves, but willing to meet our brethren whose experience has been different and whose views are not expressed in exactly the same language as our own, with the sincere belief that we are all of us humbly seeking for such indications of God's will as may enable us to work more entirely with Him for His own eternal purposes.

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The church and the nation; charges an
addresses. Edited byLouise Creighton.
New York, Longmans, Green, 1905.
xvi, 336p. 20cm.

1. Church of England--Addresses, essa
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